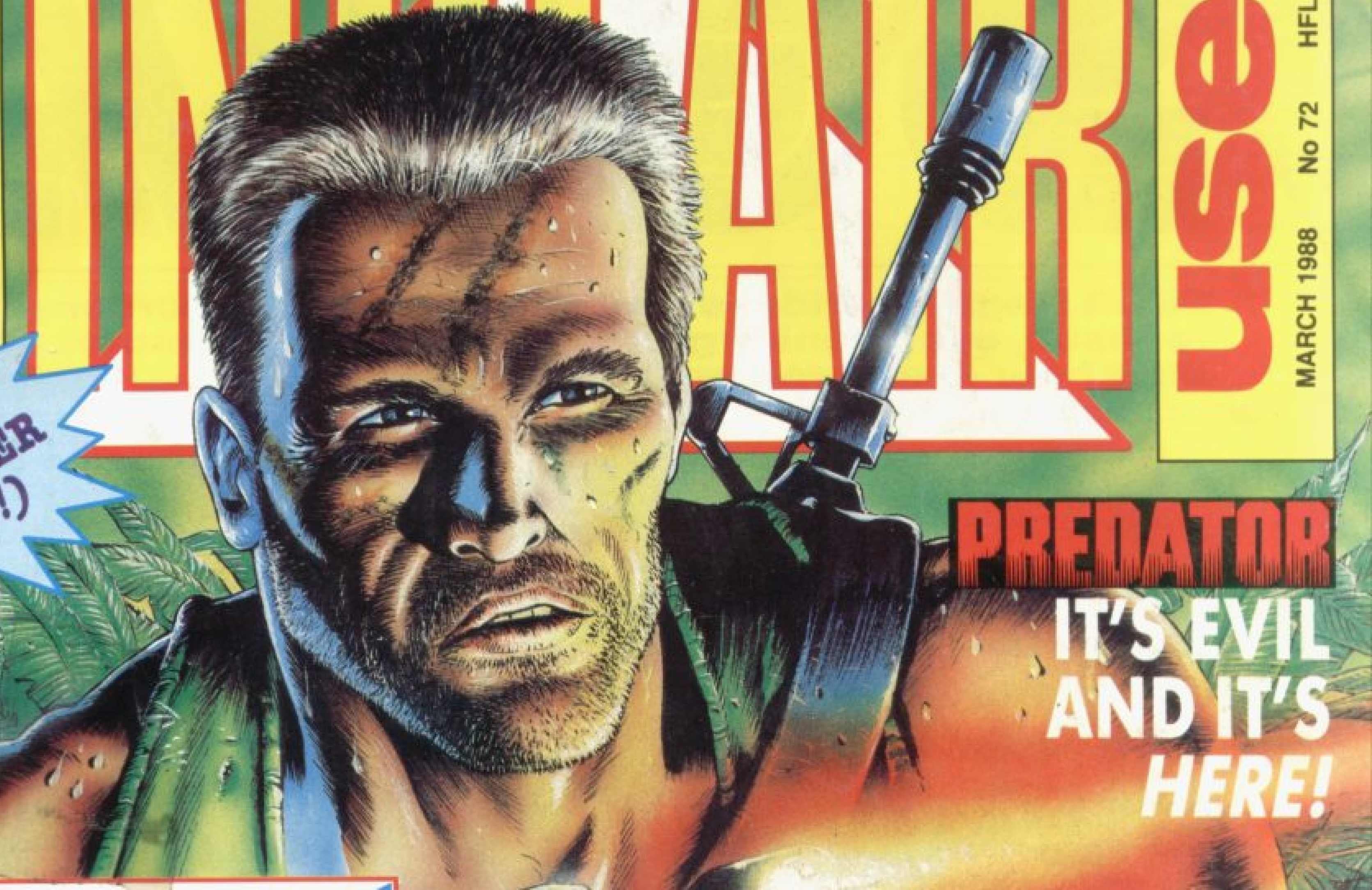
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ISSN No 0262-5458

CONT

Competitions

Win a helicopter 36

Honest to goodness. Just about the fabbest prize we've ever given away – a fantastic radio controlled helicopter that flies and everything – threaten the neighbours!



Go on a hovercraft 56

Zoom around very fast slightly above the earth and get lessons on how to control it!

Bear Essentials 48

Ha! Just bought a Spectrum? Forget all that guff about edukachon and learning to program. Here's what you really need to know. How to do Pokes, what words like OOer really mean.

Loony Peripherals 54

They're crazy! They're oddball! They fit snugly on the back of your Spectrum. Find out about the cuddly toy destruction machine the skateboard control device and many many more. Unbelievable? Absolutely right – we made it all up.



SOFTWARE

ARCADE



MEGATAPE ONE 8

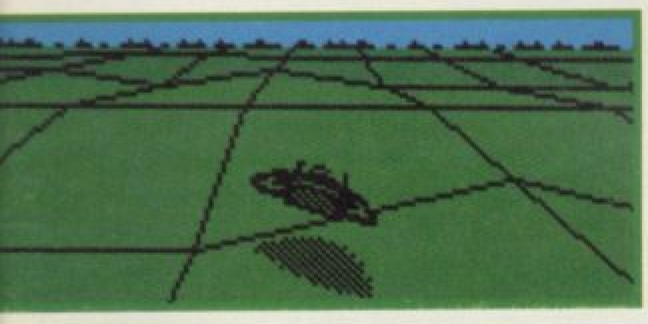
The first of ...well let's not give anything away. Check out the tape, read about the

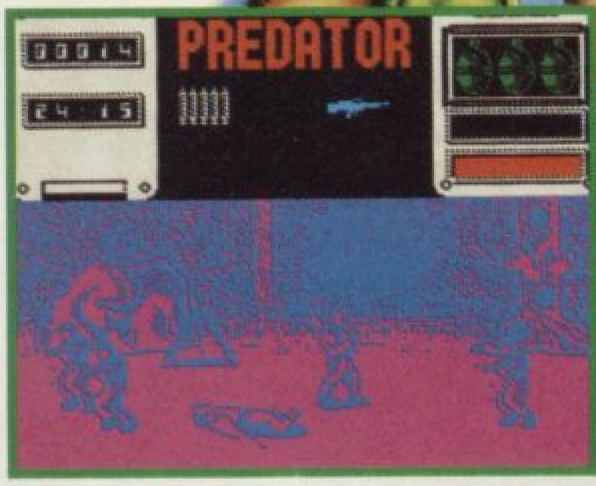




ENTS



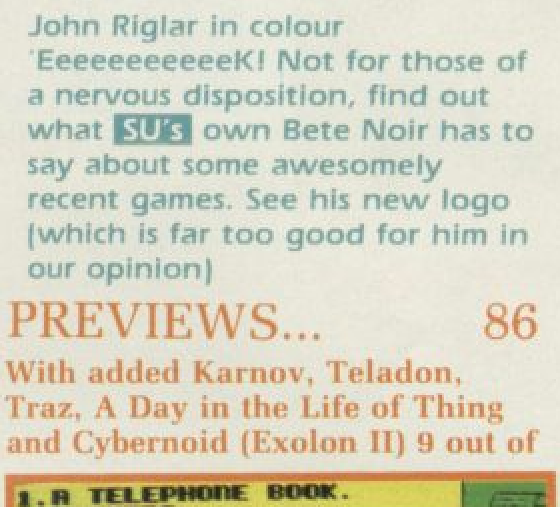




It's evil, it's here and it's got a good review. It's Predator – we'll think you'll like it.

John Riglar in colour 'EeeeeeeeeeeK! Not for those of a nervous disposition, find out what SU's own Bete Noir has to say about some awesomely recent games. See his new logo (which is far too good for him in our opinion)

With added Karnov, Teladon, Traz, A Day in the Life of Thing and Cybernoid (Exolon II) 9 out of 10 housewives who expressed a preference said that our Previews section beats other magazines into a squashy little pulp – no question.



Gordo has departed for colder climes. The Sorceress is now in control (Ooer!)

We've spruced up Helpline – given it a new logo, new ideas and a new brief – to answer your questions about how particularly awesome game effects were done. Check it out!

A new look for Surgery with lots of ultra authorative info from Doc Goodwins on all those little private technical problems you don't like to talk about.

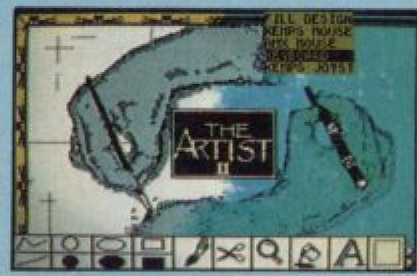
What are they? Where are they? Why are they? Could it be the beginning of something new? Who puts them there? Are there any sentences in this piece which don't end in a question mark? No (Very conceptual)

programmers, find out about the awesome Pokes on Tape. Play the stunning demo of Nineteen and get a special £2 off the price of the cassette the second it's released! Read out about Zarjas the utterly exclusive game. Wonder how on earth we're going to follow it up next month...

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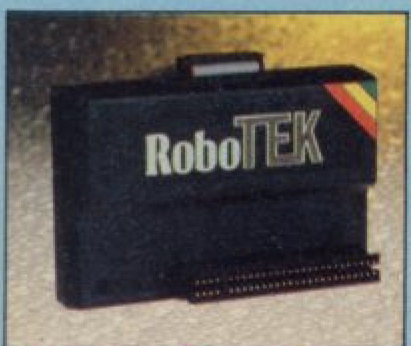
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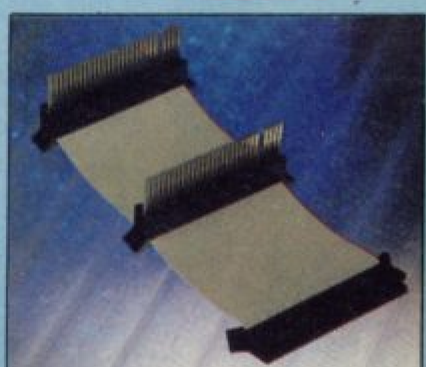
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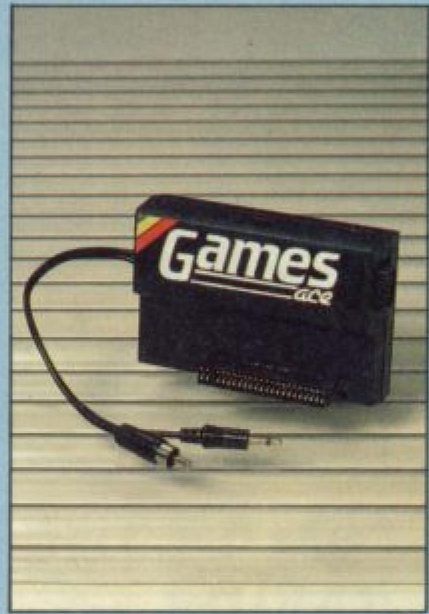
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Welcome to Megatape One!

You may have noticed that this month's Sinclair User has a certain something, a quality unseen before on your favourite Spectrum games magazine. It's called the Megatape, and we'll be doing them regularly from now on. Now, we're not the first mag to offer you a tape, and we'll probably not be the last. But we think ours is a little different. Check out all the things you get:

Side One:

- ► A Fantastic Kamikaze Bear Loading Screen
- ► The Main Event – "Zarjas" Our Specially Commissioned Binary Design Game
- ► 5 Incredible Pokes by Adrian Singh

Side Two:

- ► A Playable Demo of Cascade's forthcoming "19"

Yes, so you're presumably looking for the Gremlin Asterisks at the bottom of the page with the little line "Not really – we were only joking". Can't find one can you? That's because we're telling the complete truth. Incredible, isn't it? So stick in your tape, type Load"" (in 48K mode) and get playing

The Kamikaze Bear Loading Screen

Specially designed for us by top Spectrum artist Dennis Harris, it's a brill pic of everyone's favourite cuddly killer in action. Far more exciting than your usual efforts on other mags' tapes.



Poke City On Tape!

Adrian Singh – Mr Poke – has surpassed himself with a wonder of a program that loads in a single unit, and offers pokes for Terramex, Madballs, Phantom Club, Ace 2 and Nebulus, as well as information about what each does. It's all fabbily presented, and we're not going to tell you any more. Load it up for yourself. If you have a tape counter, write down when it starts in the ridiculously small squares provided on the tape.

Zarjas – The Brand New Shoot-Out

Binary Design, the people behind fantastic games like Zub and Amaurote worked til unheard-of hours perfecting this little wonder.

Deep in the uncharted reaches of the infinite blackness that can only be described as Space, a single seater fighter careers off course having been separated from its protective convoy. At the controls – Starpilot Bear, K.M. (E04FD) a wildcard rogue dogfighter – the most reckless, unreliable, talented and psychotic bear ever to fly. The meteor shower didn't come as much of a suprise, he'd outflown far worst back on the sim-tank back home, but this was for real. Every time the ship collides with an asteroid, its energy is drained. Once it reaches zero – the bear's in real trouble.

The aliens from evil Zoq Empire were mean critters. They just kept coming. This was going to be a firefight to remember.

You've got to fly the fighter using the keyboard or any joystick. You can also change the graphics colours by holding down CAPS SHIFT and a cursor key.



19 - A Fully Playable Demo

Cascade Games are just about to release the game of the record, and now you can check it out for yourself! It's the shooting range section from Part 1 – Boot Camp, and as well as some fab graphics and action (see previews for more info) it's got sound effects and music and it shows that we haven't been blathering on about the game for nothing.

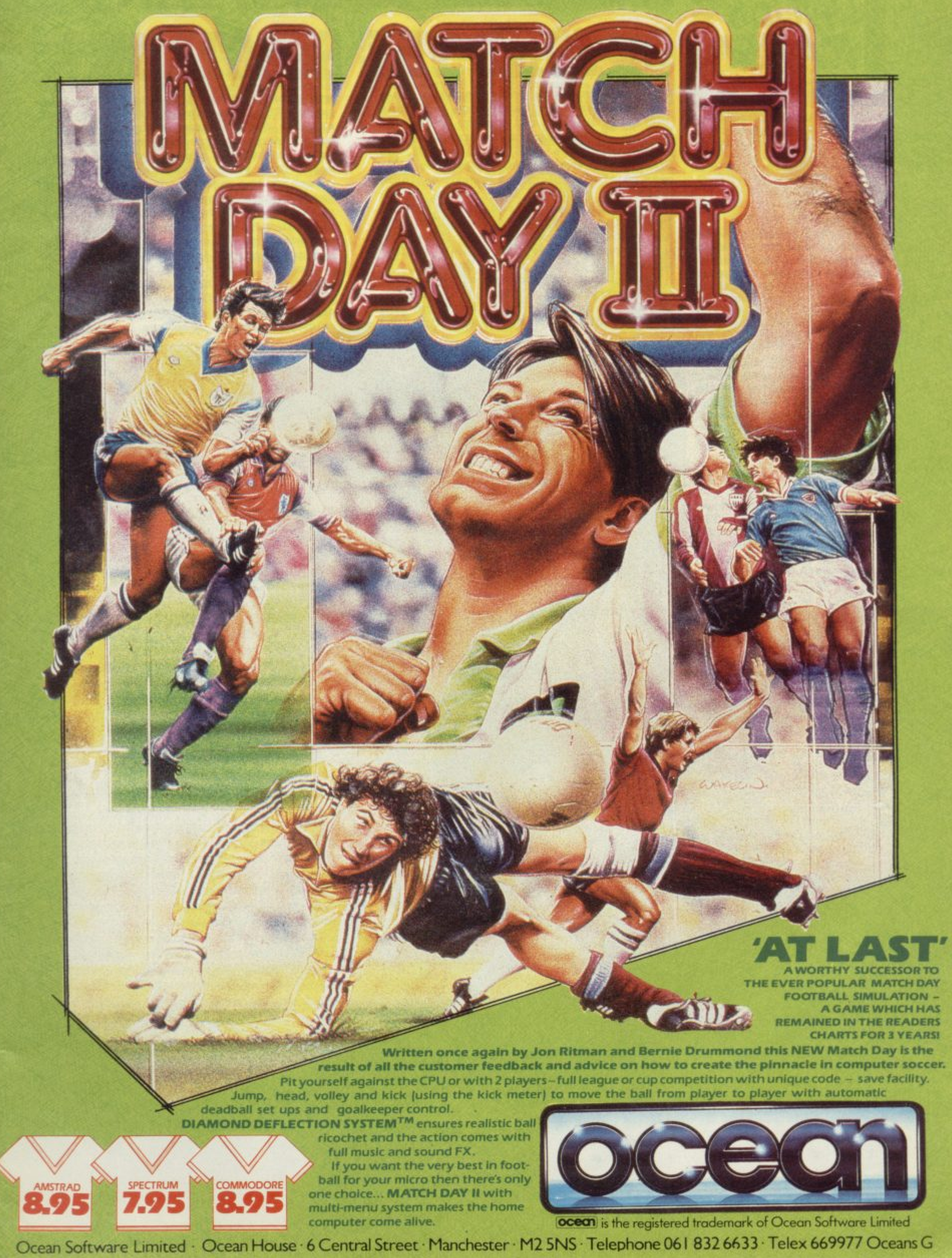
The idea is to shoot the bad guys and leave defenceless characters alone. You'll soon get the idea. Full instructions are included anyway.



About Binary Design

Binary Design is probably one of the top five most blummin-damned-clever software houses in the country at the moment. It first came to SU's notice when Mastertronic released a little-known game called Zub. It might have gone virtually unnoticed in the flood of Budget Software were it not for the fact that we realised that it was one of the most addictive and amusing games in ages and gave it a Classic. Binary is responsible for the hottest of Mastertronic's games . . .

John Pickford (who created Zub and Amaurote) programmed Zarjas for us with Peter Gartside, who did all the twiddley bits, so you've got a pretty good idea what sort of quality to expect.


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UNDER RAPS!

■ Incentive are already working on the follow-up to **Driller.** Called **The Dark Side,** it will more or less foloow-on where its predecessor left off. The people bhind the programming are Incentive's In-house team, collectively known as Major Developments. As yet, no release date has been set for **The Dark Side.**

■ Roger Taylor is Cascade's blue-eyed programmer at the moment, hard at work on **Traz.** It's a **Break Out** clone, that has an important extra detail; it can lay claim to being the first ever **Break Out** game that features its own construction kit. Expect a preview of **Traz** in April's edition.

■ A new label this month from the Ocean stable by the name of Special FX. Scheduled to produce four games during 1988, In-house programmers are currently at work on **Firefly,** the label's first release, due in a couple of months' time.

■ Anyone who likes zooming around all over the place in a very fast and very dangerous aeroplane will be thoroughly excited over the next Activision release. **Gee Bee Air Rally** is currently being programmed by Steve (US Aliens) Cartwright. It's going to be a **3-D Air Race Game,** and you're going to be very impressed.

Newsdate: March

Whod

BEYOND THE SPECTRUM?

There's exciting news from the general direction of Cambridge, but Uncle Clive Sinclair and co have little to do with it. Miles Gordon Technology, the people who gave (OK, sold) us all the Disciple and the +D disk interfaces have been quietly developing a Spectrum clone. Clone is possibly the wrong word; although the machine, codenamed Sam, is designed to run existing games software it has twice the memory, three times the screen performance and is half as fast again as the current crop of Spectra.

But in the great tradition of the computer industry, Sam isn't quite finished yet. The design currently takes the form of a large breadboard stuffed with chips, but will shortly go into just one custom gate array. This, toegether with eight Ram chips, a Z80B, a Rom, a sound chip and some video circuitry, will produce a computer potentially capable of blowing the socks off anything else in captivity.

Perhaps the most fascinating aspect of Sam for gamesplayers is the video. As well as the 'standard' Spectrum screen beloved of us all, it has three other modes. There's one with twice the number of characters across the screen in two colour, one with no vertical colour clash — adjacent horizontal lines can have different *Ink* and *Paper* with no conflict —and the star of the show has eight colours per pixel, with no colour clash at all. Of course, the more you

● Zip-e-dee-doo-dah, and all that rubbish, Gremlin have the licence to a certain Walt Disney character who speaks in a high-pitched voice and wears the most appalling shorts. M. Mouse Esq. is shortly to make his first appearance on a computer.

The Mickey Mouse Game as yet has no title, but the chances of it being called **Mickey Mouse — The Computer Game** are probably quite high. A rather invovled synopsis has already been drawn up, and the whole thing sounds wildly exciting.

It's going to be yet another of those classic tales of good versus evil, with old Michael desperately trying to save Disney's Magic Castle (the one that has Tinkerbell flying out of it on Disney-time) from that big, bad ogre King. Four evil witches have nicked the magic wand that supplies Disneyland with all its niceness, and Mickey must assemble all the broken bits and defeat the evil Ogre before all the Disney magic has gone. To help him, he's going to have some magic water for sprinkling on things to make them go from whence they came, and a large club, the use of which is probably self-explanatory.

Expect Mickey to arrive on your computer sometime around March, and then we can all start whistling a happy tune, can't we?





● **For those of you who like to think that they actually care about the software industry, a little information about one software house in particular may well come in handy.**

Platoon **has recently been released, and anyone with half a brain could tell you that the packaging is marvellous. The big box contains not only the game, but a large poster, colour photo and an audio cassette featuring Smokey Robinson's *Tracks of My Tears,* which is just one of the songs used in the film. (And if you're wondering who Smokey Robinson is, ask your grandad). Ocean are going to try and release more games in smart extra packaging, but they're cutting down the number of releases to only about twenty-four this year.**

This will include four new releases on a label called Special FX. Future goodies include Robocop, **licensed from the film, and** Target Renegade, **follow-up to the hugely successful** Renegade **itself. So keep your eyes peeled for what Ocean/Imagine/ Special FX have to offer in the coming year.**

display the more memory you need, but as Sam has 256K of Ram this shouldn't be a problem. And the hardware is vastly more flexible than the old Spectrum when it comes to programming for the new modes, opening new options for games designers.

The Z80B in Sam is almost identical to the the Z80A in the Spectrum, but as it runs at 6 MHz instead of 3.5 MHz programs can speed up considerably. There won't be a massive improvement in games, because programs running in Ram have to share time with the video display, but Basic is "impressively faster" according to machine designer Brian Gordon. They can't use Spectrum Basic, because Amstrad own the copyright, but a team of respected Spectrumites are designing one which will live in 32K of Rom and will be "largely compatible' with the old version. How many games will run remains to be seen, but Brian Gordon claims to have run a wide variety of off-the-shelf tapes with few problems on the prototypes.

Against all that the sound is disappointing; the 8912 chip (as heard in 128/+2/+3, Amstrad CPC) provided the backing. There is Midi in/out but no printer or modem ports. Joy-stick, lightpen and mouse sockets are provided.

And the price? Would you believe £99.95? As mentioned, Sam is far from finished, and there have been an awful lot of unfinished computers in the past. But Miles Gordon seem confident that they can deliver, and even if they have to start off with a 128K machine with a later memory upgrade to meet the price limit the idea seems a winner. If it happens, then a late summer launch is on the cards. SU, and no doubt Amstrad, await the outcome with interest.

Tales of Budget Labels acquiring Grown-up software house's back catalogues usually meet with derision, since the games involved tend to be the more manky titles. But the news that Rack-It has bought the rather smart Gargoyle Games back catalogue ought to be greeted with a loud whoop of joy.

Any moment, titles such as **Tir na Nog, Dun Darach** and **Sweevo's World** will be appearing for the tasty price of £2.99, with plans for a disc compilation later in the year.

Remember Codemasters? They make lots of money. So why don't they give the odd bit to charity, I hear you cry?

Well hush your mouths, because they're going to. The Oliver Twins, those notable Coders, are putting the finishing touches to a little game that's going to be called **The Race Against Time.** (Bob Geldof did that didn't he?) The game is due to be released on the 9th April, across all formats, and most of the money will go straight to Sport Aid, which is just one of the spin-off charities from Live Aid. **The Race Against Time** will probably retail for around £4.99, with roughly £2 from each copy going to Sport Aid. It's going to be an arcade adventure, involving some swanky digitised graphics and some rather complicated puzzles along the route.

An apology to Trojan about our review of **The Last Word** (SU 70). We said that the program was only available for the 128K Sepctrum, which is in fact not the case. **The Last Word** runs equally well on the 48K, and is equally highly recommended.

Here's some exciting news about the latest release from CRL. Is it as tasteless as **Jack the Ripper**? Read on.

Road Warrior gives you, the punter, the chance to drive some fast cars, from Ferraris to VWs.

The idea behind all this hip-dudeness is street-cleaning. The Hell's Angels (remember them? Neither do I) are ritually getting together for no apparent reason, and making a dreadful mess all over the place. You've been picked to clean things up, and get rid of the Angels. You're going to have to watch your speed (in case the cops get you) and your petrol (in case you run out).



There's also lots of opportunity to scratch your paintwork and park you car on top of someone else's.

Still, all that aside, in the absence of **Road Warrior** screen shots, here's a picture of a person from CRL looking very hard in a car.

A quick word to everyone out there who entered the Mega-Competition in the January issue.

Lots of people are already ringing in and demanding to know where their prize is. Well the answer is, we've still got it. We're trying to sort out all the thousands and thousands of entries, so if you haven't got yours yet please be patient, we'll get them out to you as soon as possible. Honest.

Telecomsoft continue to grow as a superior software house as they sign up new programmers. Latest to join Firebird and Rainbird are the team Maelstrom, and the singular Bo Jangeborg.

Maelstrom is headed by Mike **'Dark Sceptre'** Singleton and Malcolm 'The Kid' Hellon, backed up by a team of six other programmers. Their contract will last for a year, during which time they will produce four games across all formats, of all types. At least one of these will be 16 bit only, but the other three ought to be available on Spectrum. There are plans to produce an arcade game, a stategy/arcade game and a space opera that's guaranteed to blow your brains out.

Bo Jangeborg is well know for the **Fairlight** games, and has signed up with BT to produce two gmes, the first of which will be a Spectrum title. All Telecomsoft could say was that the game was to be a Hi-Res arcade shoot-'em-up.

Gremlin are to release **The Pink Panther** and **Tom and Jerry** on the Spectrum sometime early this year.

The licence to both **The Pink Panther** and **Tom and Jerry** belongs to Magic Bytes, who are a development house. Previously, Magic Bytes were working for Ariolasoft, but because of a change in marketing ideas, they've now signed themselves over to Gremlin.

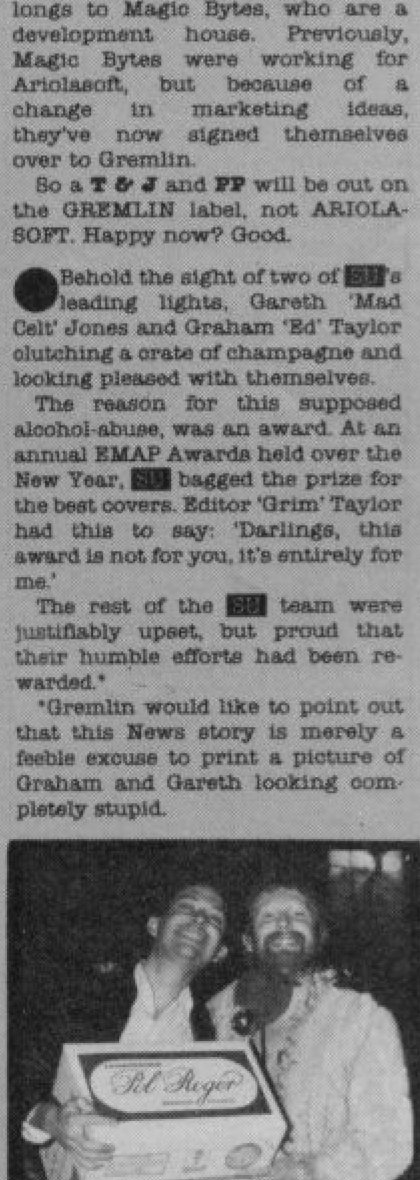
So a **T & J** and **PP** will be out on the GREMLIN label, not ARIOLASOFT. Happy now? Good.

Behold the sight of two of SU's leading lights, Gareth 'Mad Celt' Jones and Graham 'Ed' Taylor clutching a crate of champagne and looking pleased with themselves.

The reason for this supposed alcohol-abuse, was an award. At an annual EMAP Awards held over the New Year, SU bagged the prize for the best covers. Editor 'Grim' Taylor had this to say: 'Darlings, this award is not for you, it's entirely for me.'

The rest of the SU team were justifiably upset, but proud that their humble efforts had been rewarded.*

*Gremlin would like to point out that this News story is merely a feeble excuse to print a picture of Graham and Gareth looking completely stupid.



The Kamikaze Bear Headlines

OK **scuzz**, listen up. This is a **noo** piece of the mag you ain't never seen before, so pay attention. It's here that **Kamikaze** gets his say about what's bin' happenin' this month. Forget the stuff that used to occupy this space, now's the time to get serious.

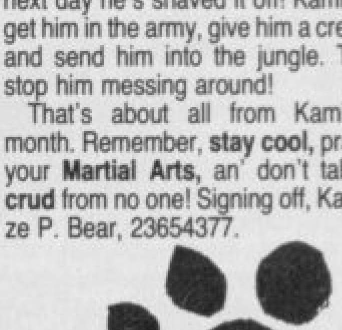
So what's bin crucial in the last month or so? Well, there was some **serious** stuff on tell, ol' Kami like to watch a bit of **telly**, when he's not on a **dangerous mission** somewhere. There's bin the **Superbowl**, a chance for you Limeys to see America's finest at their best. And the **Fat Japs** on Channel 4, d'ya see them? I'm gonna teach Douglas how to **Sumo** Wrestle, toughen him up a bit.

There was some **bad stuff** on the telly too, an' Kamikaze don't like the **bad stuff.** Grrr. There was some cartoon version of **T'underboirds**, everybody knows the best bit about **T'underboirds** was spotting the strings! And bring back the real Lady Penelope, she's some cool chick. And while we're talking about cartunes, what about **My Little Pony**? Dross. I'd soon show them the way to **My Little Glue Factory**, lemme attem!! Grrrrrrrr!!!

Life in **SU HQ** is a bit hectic at the moment, lots of troops shippin' out an' noo ones shippin' in. Our own **Mike Corr** went off to California to laze on a beach all day, case of **Corky Goes to Hollywood,** narf, narf? (Laugh, Limeys, or you'll beee sorreee). So we got this **Katherine** and **Emma** women in. They're on probation, if I don't like 'em, they'll soon know. And that dozy broad **Tamara** crashed her car, so anyone hears of a spare Renault 5 'bonnet goin' cheap, no questions asked, let Kami know. Gotta stop her **whingeing** somehow.

The troops have asked me to let you know a couple of bits of industry gossip. **Ocean** launched **Platoon** a couple weeks back, an' invited everyone to go an' have nosh with 'em. We also got to see the film, there's some serious fighting in that, believe me. Next in line from the Wavy boys is **Robocop**, 'cos everyone thinks he's hard. Well Kami thinks he's about as hard as a sardine, so there. Then there's the riddle of Richie's moustache. Case of, now ya see it, now ya don't! Dickie Tidsall from US Gold keeps playing about with his facial hair, one day he's got a ferret on his top lip, next day he's shaved it off! Kami says get him in the army, give him a crew cut and send him into the jungle. That's stop him messing around!

That's about all from Kami this month. Remember, **stay cool,** practise your **Martial Arts,** an' don't take no **crud** from no one! Signing off, Kamikaze P. Bear, 23654377.



PLATOON



Ocean's first big launch of 1988 proves to be as good a game as they've done for some time; in shockingly bad taste, it has to be said, but a good game nonetheless.

Oliver Stone's film Platoon, just released on video, is a brutal, bloody, foul-mouthed production. However, while the film, for all its faults has an anti-war message, the game itself trivialises it to an appalling extent. Rather than depicting the dehumanising effect of war (pretty difficult though I must admit in 48K), the game is a straightforward shoot-'em-up, in which gooks (that's Vietnamese to you boy) exist only to be gunned down.

The game is rather like a 1988 version of Beachhead; there are six sub-games, none startlingly original in itself, each based loosely on an episode from the film. These load in three sections on the 48K machine, or all in one on the 128K.

Part One is a jungle maze in which your aim is to find a bundle of explosives. You can move in and out of the background, the graphics of which are suitably sultry. There's very good use of colour where it would have been easier to do the whole thing in mono. The character design is good too, with clean sprite masking and smooth animation. Enemy soldiers try to gun you down, running at you along the paths, popping from foxholes or dropping from the trees. You can shoot them, duck under their fire or sometimes leap over them. Booby traps are strategically placed in order to blow you to bits, and you'll soon get through several of the fifteen lives available to you; five platoon members, with three lives each.

You can throw grenades using the space bar, and you'll automatically pick up the food, ammunition and medical supplies which improve your status. Mainly, though, this first section is definitely one for



mapping fiends. The toughest part is spotting the trip wires. I kept blundering into them happily, and wondering what was killing me.

After collecting the explosives and making your way to the bridge, Part Two is set in a village where you have to fight your way through the huts searching for a torch and a map, before crawling into a tunnel network. In Section Three, the right hand side of the screen turns into a map, while a crosshair appears in the graphic of the tunnel interior. Using this, you zap the knife-wielding soldiers who spring up in front of you while searching for the





FACTS BOX

Six exciting mini-arcade games combined to form one of Ocean's best titles yet

PLATOON
Label: Ocean
Authors: Choice Software
Price: £9.95 cassette, £14.95 disc
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Chris Jenkins

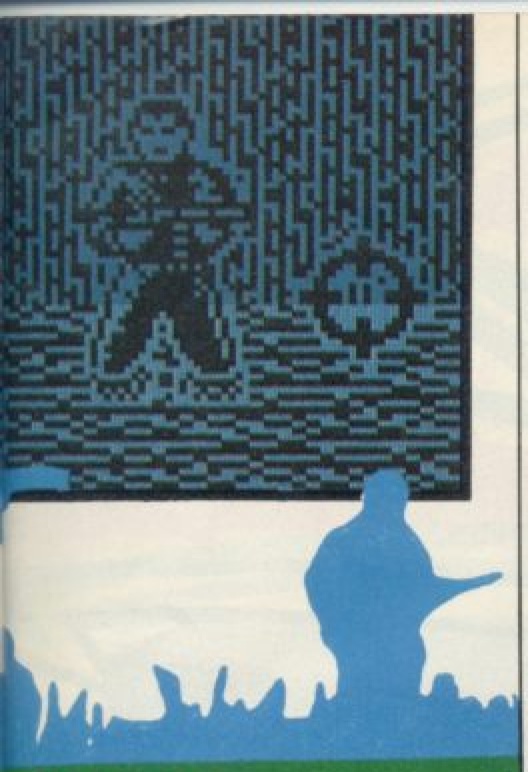
★★★★☆
★★★★☆ 8

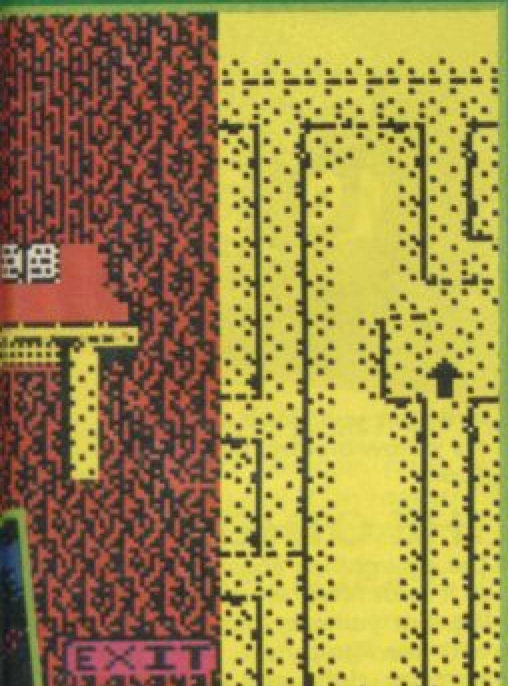
flares and compass you need for the next section. The control mode – move, shoot or search – changes automatically according to what's happening on the screen.

Back to the jungle for Section Five, possibly the best part of the game. Here, you have to make your way along jungle paths strewn with barbed wire and other obstacles, following the compass bearing which will bring you freedom. V.C. snipers and mines bar your way to the top of the screen, and there are many false turnings.

In the last section (which I admit I haven't yet reached) you have to blow the renegade Sergeant Barnes (he of the horrendously scarred face) out of his bunker by scoring five direct hits with grenades.

Six enjoyable mini-games then, linked together by a strong plotline, and common factors such as your decreasing ammunition, the strategy involved in switching control from wounded to healthy men,







and the morale counter which marks the end of the game should it reach zero.

In the most ambitious bit of packaging design yet, the game comes in a large format box with a poster, a photo, an audio cassette (Smokey Robinson's Tracks of My Tears from the film soundtrack) and even a competition to win a copy of the video.

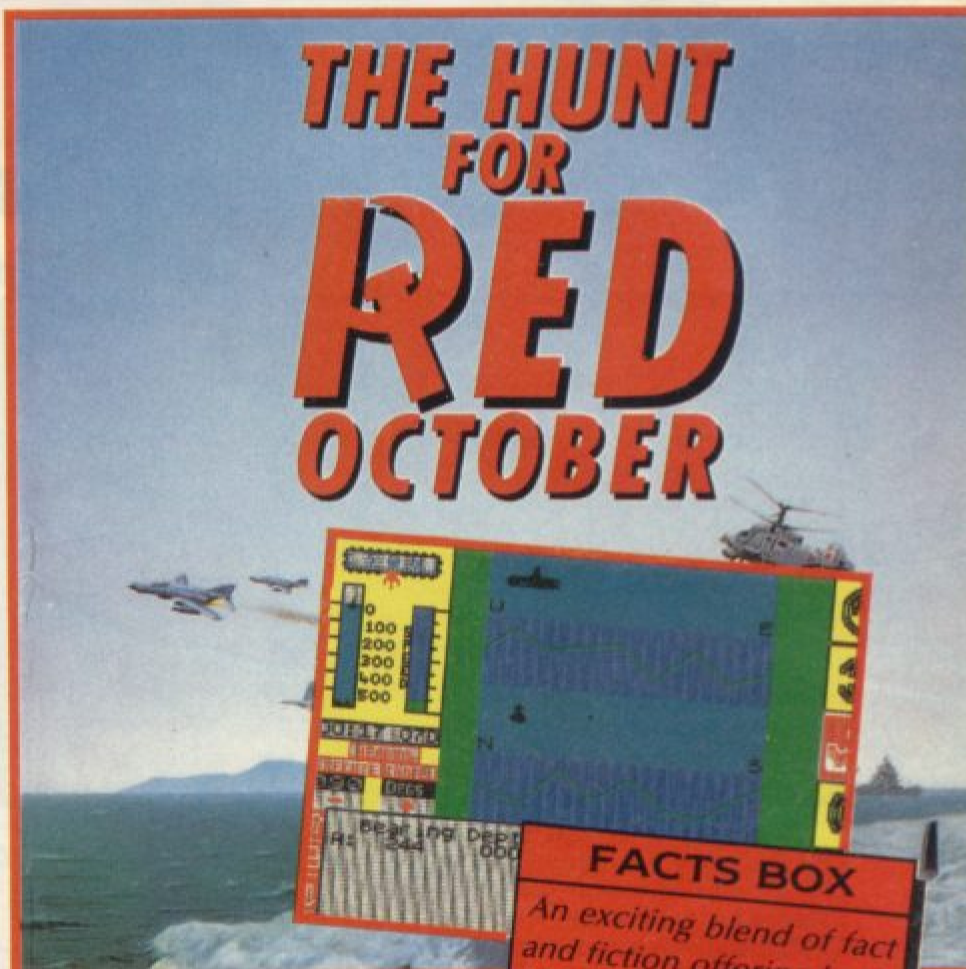
Not long ago people just a little older than the average SU reader were fighting and dying in VietNam. You might argue that the game is justified because it's based on a film, but would Ocean feel justified in producing an arcade game based on a film of the Manson killings or the Hungerford massacre? If they genuinely wanted to convey the horror of war, why not include the scene from the film where a guerilla is clubbed to death?

I liked the game; it's well-presented, neatly programmed and as the manual claims "packed with fun and excitement" – just like the VietNam war itself, I suppose. The first casualty of war may be innocence, but it seems the first casualty of marketing is good taste■

ARCADE REVIEW

THE HUNT FOR RED OCTOBER





A case of Russian in where angels fear to tread (This joke is *not* funny – Ed.) The Hunt for Red October belongs to that most difficult of genres, the submarine-simulator-based-on-a-best-selling-novel. It's a complex and challenging game, and if you can forgive the fact that all the R's are printed backwards, the manual and the game itself ooze authenticity.

The plot. You are the commander of a top secret Russian nuclear submarine, Red October. Fed up with a constant diet of cabbage and vodka, you have decided to defect to the West. You must make a rendezvous with the American fleet in order to fake an accident an complete your defection; but first you must traverse the Atlantic with the Russian fleet searching for you!

Everything is fashionably icon-driven from the High Level Command Screen. The pointer is moved using the joystick or keyboard, and you select the function you require from the left or right of the screen. In the centre is the map display, which shows your own position, and those of the American and Russian fleets.

Other commands can be issued by clicking on the icons for particular officers. For instance, to switch on the sonar, or the sea bed contour display, you have to select the right icon then click on EXECUTE. You can cancel orders if you change your mind, and you'll find yourself sometimes having to do this as the situation changes. Remember that not all the officers are in on the plot (some of them want to stay Ruskies); if you deviate from the mission profile, they may relieve you of your command, in which case you've lost the game.

Combining your sonar information with the contour display enables you to navigate dangerous undersea terrain without risking sonar detection by the fleet. Your power source is also important; you can choose fast, noisy propellors, or slower but more silent caterpillar tracks (yes! this submarine crawls!). If your pursuers come too close, you can choose to fight. The Weapons Officer icon gives you control of the torpedoes, which can be aimed automatically or manually. To do this you'll need to surface to periscope depth, study the seascape, and identify enemy ships using the recognition chart in the manual. The Electronic Surveillance option allows you to pick up messages from enemy ships, which are displayed beneath the main screen.

You'll enjoy Red October whether you like strategy games, action or simulations.

There's a catch, of course. The manual is fine if you have a PC, but pretty dreadful if you have a Spectrum. Many of the screen displays are different, the command controls aren't explained properly, and the tiny sheet included for the benefit of Spectrum owners does little more than explain which bits have had to be left out of the Spectrum version. I would have thought that with a little extra effort, a 128K version with full facilities, and improved music and sound would have been a doddle. Black marks for neglecting Spectrum owners but otherwise A+ ■

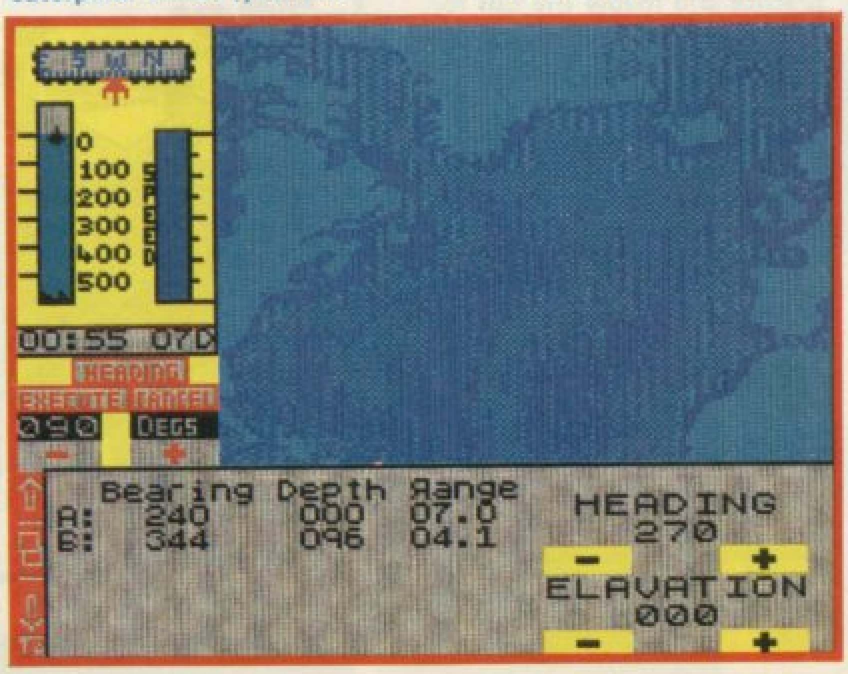
FACTS BOX

An exciting blend of fact and fiction offering both action and depth

THE HUNT FOR RED OCTOBER
Label: Grandslam
Authors: Mike Fox
Price: £14.95
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Chris Jenkins

★★★★☆
★★★★☆ 8



THE JON RIGLAR EXPERIENCE

ZAP

Well viewers! What a turn up for the books! To everyone's utter amazement this month's wonderful (and I use the word with care) Zapchat has become even more wonderful because it has been 'transformed' into full 'breathing' colour – a splash of violet here and a spook-podlet full of green ochre triangles there, you know the sort of thing. Triple swer-oon! But that is not all – Several so called 'features' have been completely and utterly chopped and to replace them a trillion new confuddling creations have appeared on the scene. By jove, what a beautiful day missus and no mistake Ooflaaflaa! (Blithering idiot – Ed.)



As you can now see (or maybe not if you are that way inclined) we have separated each section of tips into individual boxes. This is, of course, 100% boggle-blasting, utterly captivating and hugely unexciting news which I am sure you will inwardly digest and treasure for the rest of this week. But! Who the buggins are Tiertex when they're at home? (Note the rather tame link there.) Well, if you haven't been sitting on Mars twiddling your thumbs for the past few months, you'll realise already that Tiertex wrote the rather delightful wirgly code bits that make up *720°*. Some tips:

STANDBY TO ACCESS: 720° . . . US Gold
SECTION WRITERS: Jon Riglar, Roger Davis

The main tip is not to go to the skate parks in a direct route. The time limit does look small, but it does last a fair length of time. So on the way to a park perform as many stunts as you can to earn maximum marks. This is easily done (!) – try skating off and then turning and jumping at the same time. (Hmm) If you keep the 'turn' key depressed you should land having just earnt yourself maximum 400 points instead of the usual completely useless score of 50.

Make use of the ramps and platforms that lie around skate city to help you gain height for your jumps. If you arrive at a park early, don't just skate right in. Hang about outside doing tricks until the time runs out, then enter the park. When heading off to a park, skate cross-country, avoiding the paths and roads where the unicyclists and cyclists all hang out. What I want to know is, who are the blokes that appear and start waving fingers about in a vulgar fashion? Answers on a postcard to somebody else please.

Don't waste tickets and money! Go to the parks you are best at first – the ones that you can be sure of winning at least a silver medal at. If you decide to enter a different park, then practice and follow the tips for each individual park. If you've been playing the game for more than a trollop, you'll soon realise that the shops are not really worth visiting at all, actually. The items on sale hardly make any difference to your performance on the board anyway. Best save all the dosh you can – when you do die (blee!), this will be added to your score.

SLALOM PARK

This is THE park for novices (where did Tony Dillon go?) All you have to do is skate in between all the flags. This sort of explains why it's called the slalom park really doesn't it? (Anybody seen *Ski Sunday* lately?) If you fail to get a gold or silver on this, then you must be a complete dunderhead. You did what? Go away.

JUMP PARK

Just skate really fast and make sure that you avoid falling into the water. If you are chasing after the gold medal, then make sure that you skate around every yellow blobby thingy on the floor.

THE OTHERS

The downhill is absolutely easy so it's not really worth mentioning, but you may come unstuck with the Ramp Park. When you start go right and when the skater starts to rise up a ramp and somersaults, jerk (ooer, best you edit that one out Graham) *(Sorry I forgot John.* GT) left and right and do the opposite after he has turned around. If you make one single itsybitsy mistake on this one, then you've lost the chance of a gold medal (bleel). If you can't remember where the different parks are to be found and can't be bothered to find the 'Map' option, then the map below might just come in handy. Cue the art department chappies.



CHAT

STANDBY TO ACCESS: Poke Corner
SECTION WRITER: Jon 'I'm on fire' Riglar

And so another Poke Corner swirlingly idles its way into the pages that make up this fine organ – this month's collection of brazen hussies are quite up to date actually, which came as a bit of a shock to several people in the office. (Cue images of several staff types kneeling on the floor doing breathing exercises.) Other people who sent in Pokes this time around include Jon 'image like a lettuce' Rose from Bognor and Allesio Pierotl from Rome. Here we go then*:

HYSTERIA: Poke 44527,201: Shields and power
TRANTOR: Poke 54236,0: Weapons
Poke 56596,0: Power
Poke 56711,0: Poke 56700,201: Time
Poke 61008,201: Invincibility
XECUTOR: Poke 47216,201: Player one invincible
Poke 47320,201: Player two invincibility
Poke 48259,201: Enemy fire
PSYCHO SOLDIER: Poke 40123,0: Lives
BOSCONIAN: Poke 33066: Lives
Poke 33848,0: Reduce enemy missile fire

*Don't forget you need a technical oo-jamaflip like a multiface device to get these Pokes in.

STANDBY TO ACCESS: DRILLER . . . Incentive
SECTION WRITER: Jon Riglar

LAPIS LAZULI (East of Amethyst)
Blast the pyramids to allow access to travel eastwards. At the low wall, raise the height of the craft, so that you may 'look' over and activate the switch on the far side.

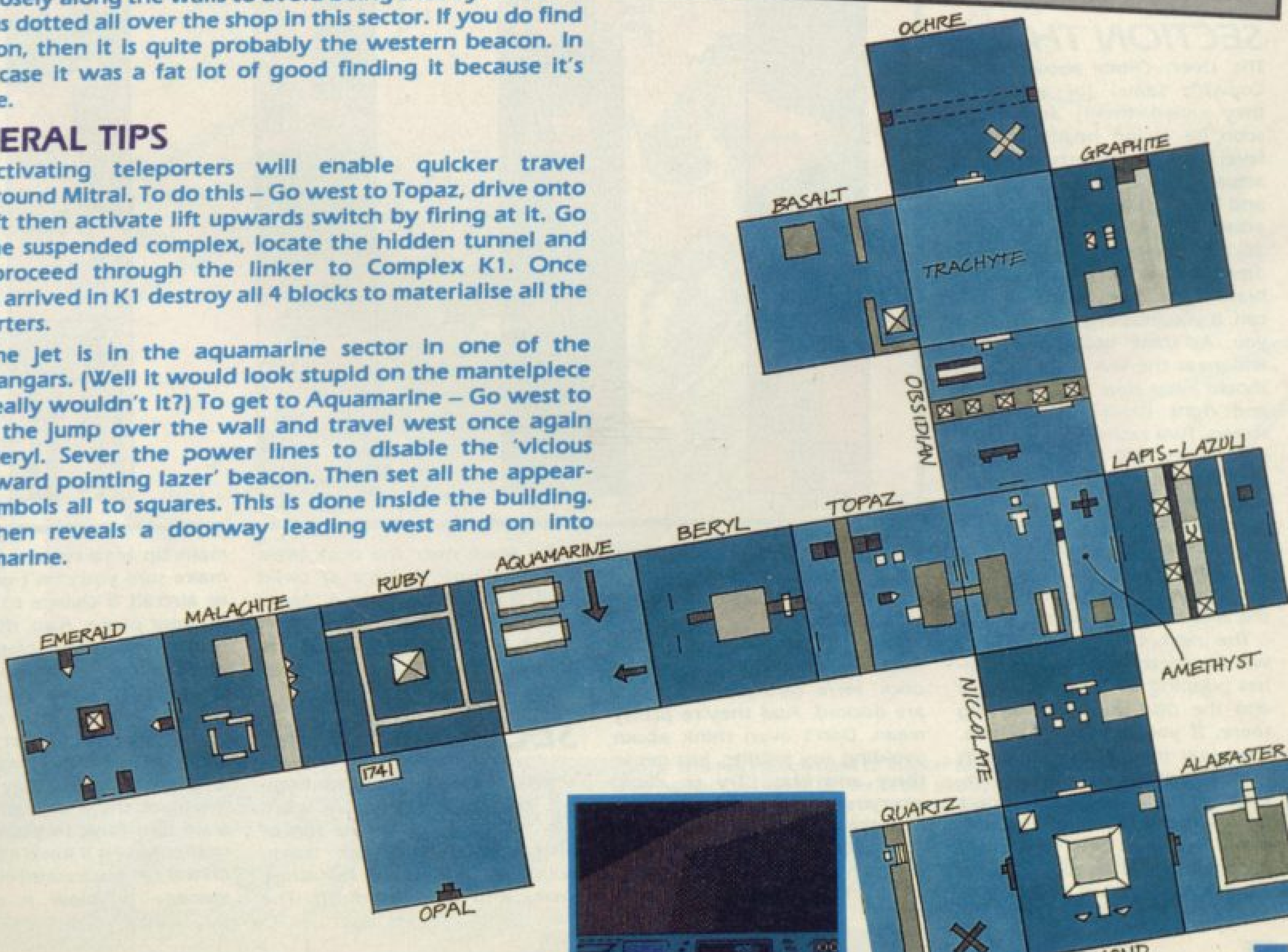
OBSIDIAN (North of Amethyst)
To cross the bloody big ravine, shoot or knock over the slab to form some sort of bridge. (Also note that if you manage to do this, you'll achieve a better score at the very same time. Indeed.) It is safer to use the rear entrance to the shed found in Obsidian.

TOPAZ (West of Amethyst)
The lazer beacon here is more of an annoyance than anything else! (Oh really? That's fine for you to say). Shoot it and it will turn through 90°.

EMERALD (East of Lapis Lazuli)
Walk closely along the walls to avoid being shot by the lazer beacons dotted all over the shop in this sector. If you do find a beacon, then it is quite probably the western beacon. In which case it was a fat lot of good finding it because it's inactive.

GENERAL TIPS
1 Activating teleporters will enable quicker travel around Mitral. To do this – Go west to Topaz, drive onto lift then activate lift upwards switch by firing at it. Go into the suspended complex, locate the hidden tunnel and then proceed through the linker to Complex K1. Once you've arrived in K1 destroy all 4 blocks to materialise all the teleporters.

2 The jet is in the aquamarine sector in one of the hangars. (Well it would look stupid on the mantelpiece really wouldn't it?) To get to Aquamarine – Go west to Topaz the jump over the wall and travel west once again into Beryl. Sever the power lines to disable the 'vicious downward pointing lazer' beacon. Then set all the appearing symbols all to squares. This is done inside the building. This then reveals a doorway leading west and on into Aquamarine.



"Macsen's EastEnders is wonderful . . ."

Sorry, that sentence just escaped from a mental home.





STANDBY TO ACCESS: FLYING SHARK . . . Firebird
SECTION WRITER: Jon Riglar

Flying Shark impersonation coming right up viewers: Hurrumph,beeb,swish,hurrumepher,swingorililiantl, hereirhfghl,arrrchl,ooer,beep. Well, really. Every couple of decades a coin-op conversion appears on my desk that is actually worth playing – and Flying Shark must be the best this year. (An observant viewer writes: That last sentence is not entirely a closed book so to speak, due to the fact this is only February. Sorry about that, carry on my good man). Anyroad, last month the 'bear' covered the first two levels of the game but we've decided to cover the last three sections this month. That's how organised we are feeling at this present moment.

SECTION THREE

The river. Climb aboard your Copwith Samel (or whatever they called them) and you'll soon be racing headlong into level 3 – this is a pretty hard one actually, lots of tanks appearing and blasting away and the odd attack of the flying circus. Right at the beginning you'll come across a river full of gunboats – blast these right away if you can, if you miss any, they'll blast you. At some point, the river will meet the sea and here you should keep clear of the far left and right hand sides of the screen. Two rather nasty enemy aeroplanes will zoom in and start to blast away. If you were a complete dunderhead and got caught out then it's spronggotslong for you. If necessary, use a smart bomb to clear the screen, but remember that it only clears the area ahead of your craft.

The next couple of minutes will be pretty frantic, aeroplanes popping in for coffee here and the odd gunboat drifting there. If you don't fall asleep, then you may well end up in front of a pretty hefty and powerful enemy battleship – don't try what one nameless person did ie he zooms over to the left hand side and then cowers, hoping the ship will just go away. It doesn't work. Instead, zoom up and over the ship blasting as you go to destroy the enemy guns. Watch out for any attacking aircraft and the occasional gunboat trying to shimmie in on the action. Provided you swerve



away whenever the ship lets rip, then you should be able to cope. You did what? Use your smart bombs then.

There are three ships to destroy and they you'll arrive at the dock. Here two further vessels are docked. And they're pretty mean. Don't even think about avoiding any missiles, just get in there and blast. Try to avoid worrying too much about armoured tanks – if you lose your concentration, you'll end up as an ooflaaflaa.

The next couple of screens take place over the dock area, with a large amount of tanks and the odd aeroplane. Make sure you grab hold of the extra smart bomb. If you manage to survive, you've completed level three.

SECTION FOUR

This is buildings, buildings, buildings all the way. You'll be flying over some sort of operations depot with trains, buildings, planes, buildings, tanks and erm, buildings. The main tip is to swerve a lot and make sure you don't give tanks or aircraft a chance to home in on your plane. Also, if for some reason you miss a plane and it dives below you and out of the screen, then move away rather quickly – it is likely to re-emerge when you least expect it and it could very well end up in the wrong orifice. Halfway through the level, there is a rather large train like tank to attack. It's a challenge – it'll keep moving up on the rail tracks until either you manage to blow it or vicky

▶ 18

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ZAPCHAT

◀ 16

verca. There are two to destroy on this level.

Right at the end of the level you'll come across a humugous amount of enemy gun emplacements. There are about seven to destroy and tanks will constantly appear from the right. Destroy them all as soon as possible using your smart bombs – you are right at the end of the level now, so you may as well. The next screen is total chaos with thousands (well not actually thousands, I'm just getting a bit excited) of aeroplanes and tanks – this is simply labelled chaos on the map. You may as well use up any smart bombs left over or instead just close your eyes and swerve all over shop shouting 'Well, if you don't buy a ticket, you can't win the raffle!' at the top of your voice. It always works (Not strictly true).

And so, you should arrive at the runway ending level four. And that's it really, from now on, you'll be whizzed back to level two to continue through levels 2, 3 and 4 until you desparately need a shave. Level one was obviously only for complete dunderheads to have a bash at the game and so they can tell their pals 'Well, you know how it is – just when the good bit started the leccy ran out and I spent the next hour trying to find spare fifty pees for the meter.'

What? Who let that Melody Maker writer into the office?

STANDBY TO ACCESS: THE FAB-BY READERS' CHART SECTION WRITER: Jon 'Hello nice girlie' Riglar

Yes!! It's still here – We had to dust the cobwebs from the corners, and pull back the curtains to let in more light, but this wonderful institution that is the Readers' Chart remains as wonderful as ever. And Simon Field is about to be mounted on fame's lofty pedastool!

1	LIGHTFORCE	F.T.L.
2	EXOLON	Hewson
3	XECUTOR	ACE
4	OUTRUN	US Gold (Bleel)
5	QUAZATRON	Hewson

Simon considers *Lightforce* to be totally swank (and why not matey?). The game he'd most like to stick into a corner and shout 'OOflaaflaa!' at is *Bubble Bobble*. If, for some insane reason, you wish to have your chart printed, then send all offerings to the Oh-I'd-Really-Like-My-Chart-Printed-Please-Jon-Campaign at the usual address (ie the one that appears at the front of the mag just above the ISSN number which we, in the biz, call Bertrum Windybottom).





STANDBY TO ACCESS: TRANTOR . . . Go! SECTION WRITERS: Jon Riglar and Bertrum Windybottom

Uncanny but true fact number one: This is a really good game. Uncanny but true fact number two: I can complete it! (Blee!) And so can you if you hold of the map printed on that bear fella in last month's SU and cast your peepers below for the ultimate guide.

As we all know the main problem in the game is trying to collect all those blasting letters to make up the computer related words. This then has to be punched into the security device and the code thrown at you then has to be punched into the teleporter terminal to allow your man to be pulled apart molecule by molecule and sent down a transmission cable at rather a high speed.

There are only sixteen computer related passwords and here they are: KEMPSTON, JOYSTICK, SPECTRUM, SOFTWARE, KEYBOARD, COMPUTER, CASSETTES, SINCLAIR, GRAPHICS, HARDWARE, TERMINAL, PRINTERS, CONTROLS, WARGAMES, WARRIORS and finally MEGAGAME. That is sixteen right? Knowing these passwords is very helpful, although you can't just whisk old Trant off to the terminal and punch them all in to get the next code. You still have to go to each locker in turn. Once you've got the password and punched in in correctly, a three letter code group will appear on the screen. WRITE IT DOWN!! It is bound to be something like YOU which appeared rather a lot of times while I was beavering away on the game. Once you've got your mits around this password, it's a case of dashing down to level 8, the transporter level, and then entering this three letter group into the terminal found there. If everything goes hunkydory, then the message 'TELEPORTER NOW OPERATIVE' will be displayed and you can beam away.

One quick tip for level 4 – you will have probably found out already that this level is the home of lotsa nasty alien type creatures that insist on running up to Trant and biting his head off. Well really.

STANDBY TO ACCESS: HIGH SCORE TABLE SECTION WRITER: Jon Riglar

COMBAT SCHOOL	52,490	Martin Fryatt
OUTRUN	9,453,207	Martin Stonebridge
COMBAT SCHOOL	170,990	Martin Stonebridge
COMBAT SCHOOL	42,304	Simon Whitworth
ZYNAPS	61,200	Christopher Dagg
ZYNAPS	200,517	Simon Whitworth
RENEGADE	136,200	Martin Stonebridge
RENEGADE	127,050	Peter Stead
OUTRUN	919,190	Christopher Dagg
EXOLON	66,550	Christopher Dagg
ENDURO RACER	501,392	Simon Whitworth

After all that brouhaha, you may have decided that your score is worthy of a place in next month's high score section. That may well be. Send in your high scores to Yes I Ruddy Well Did Matey at the usual address. Any cheques, postal orders, luncheon vouchers, books . . . (Yes, well, that's quite enough of that thank you. – Ed).

This is the end then chaps. Well I'll be blowed, doesn't time just wirgle by when you're getting paid a lot of money? Hope you liked the 'new-look' Zapchat which is, incidentally, being stretched once again next month to become 46 pages long in full colour!! (Fat chance. – Ed) In the meantime I'll leave you to work out what an 'ooflaaflaa' is. Chin chin viewers.

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Screen shot from CBM version.



Screen shot from Spectrum version.



Screen shot from Amstrad version.



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Screenshots from Amstrad version.

"FROM OUT OF THIS WORLD… …TO THE FIGHT FOR THIS WORLD!"



Screenshots from CBM64/128 version

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SMASH OFFER

MAGNETRON

Magentron is, without doubt, a seriously fab game. It looked a bit hit and miss for a while owing to legal wranglings that went on following Steve Turner's swift departure from Hewson.

So if the idea of gliding around a rather well constructed three dimensional landscape in a robot-casing, blasting nasty robots and collecting pieces of nuclear reactor appeals, we're the people to help.

Firebird have come around to the realisation that SU readers are more discerning than your average punter-Joe-on-the-streets-matey-boy-already-innit? and have said that as a special favour, you can buy a copy of the Big M. for a full £1 less than the normal price.

Yes. You can get a copy for a paltry £6.95.

And unless you're a bit of an idiot, you'll think this is a pretty generous offer■

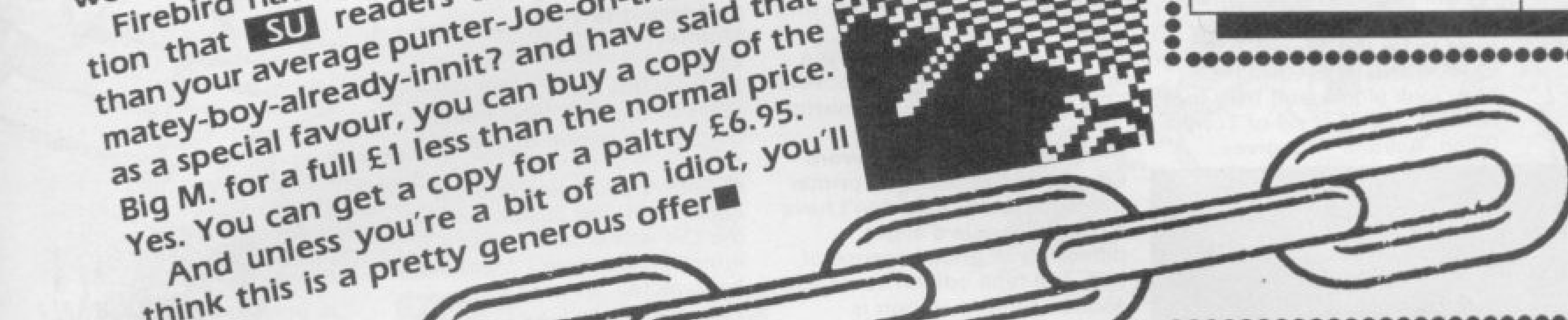


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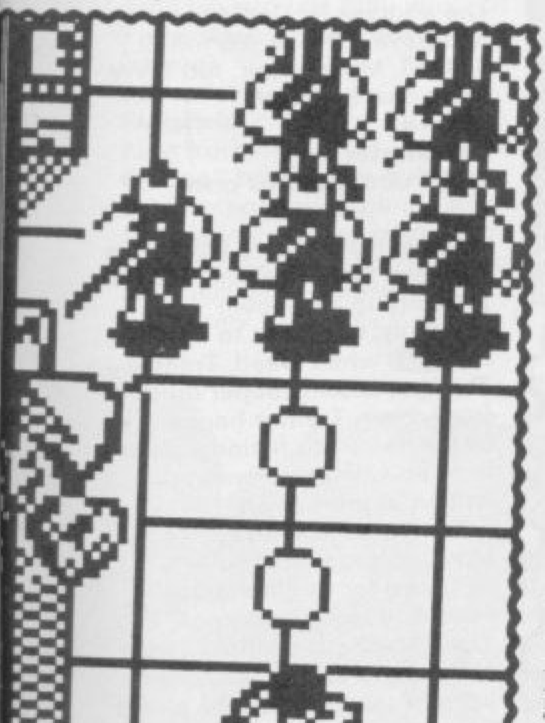
SU SMASH OFFER

MAGNETRON

Send coupon (and your name and address) to: Magnetron Smash Offer, British Telecom PLC, Mail Order Dept, PO Box 394, London N8 0QR, along with a cheque/postal order for £6.95 made payable to British Telecom PLC. Offer closes April 31.



SHACKLED



Phheeerroooooooooaaaaarrr! How do you fancy being stuck in a dungeon with lots of people who are all chained up and scantily clad?

Well, US Gold are the people to cater for your every need. Shackled is the name of the game and it's completely incredible (check out the review on p. 58). It's based loosely on the Gauntlet style of games, except it's much much better (we think).

The aim is to rescue a number of your fellow captives, having escaped from the bad guys yourself. So, as soon as you're out of your cage, it's straight back into the clutches of the guards in order to find the other holding pens throughout the huge dungeon.

Shackled is great, it's all kicking down doors and sticking ugly orcsmen in the gut with a wide variety of weapons. And of course, as any downtrodden medieval person knows, you've got to be a bit careful with your ducats these days. You don't want to just go around scattering them willy-nilly. No. In days such as these, every penny had better be wisely spent. And this – you'll be pleased to know – is where I get to the point.

US Gold, in a fit of generosity unmatched since last month has decided to offer you a copy of Shackled for an eye-rollingly dribblingly mad price of a thousand groats (that's £1) less than the normal price of £8.99.

So, clip out the coupon, send it off and wait for a few weeks and you'll be loading chain-swinging nubiles around before you can spit.■

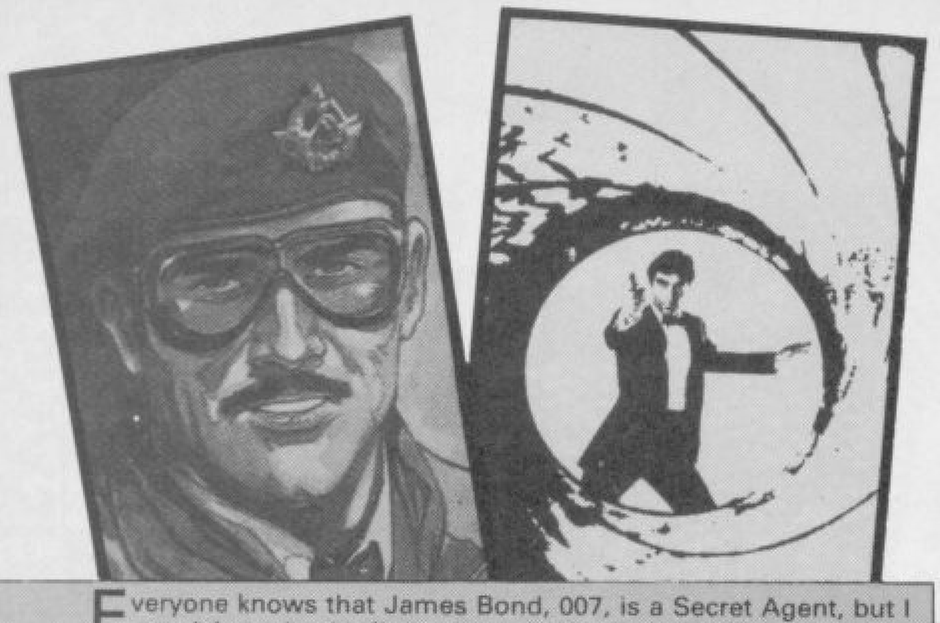
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SU SMASH OFFER

SHACKLED

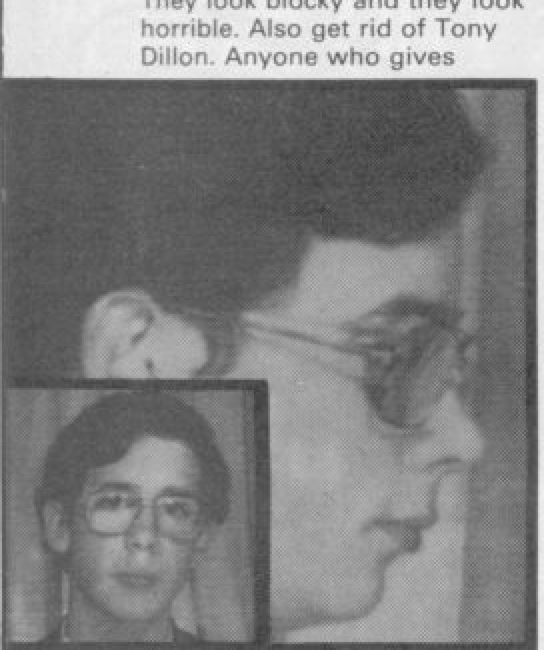
Send coupon (and your name and address) to: Shackled Smash Offer, US Gold, Units 2/3 Holford Way, Birmingham B6 7AX. Also include your cheque/postal order for £7.99 made payable to US Gold. Offer closes April 31.





Everyone knows that James Bond, 007, is a Secret Agent, but I can claim to be the first person to have spotted him in his latest game. I'm referring to the advert for **Jackal**, page 130. December SU He is seen wearing a beret and posing under the code name Deckar. A Mr. Connery is driving the jeep. Coo, what a dare devil.
Ian Prior
Reading Berks

Yoh. I've had no reason to complain before, but you've gone to far this time. STOP EXPANDING THE GRAPHICS. They look blocky and they look horrible. Also get rid of Tony Dillon. Anyone who gives



Trantor a Classic and says **Heist 2012** is good is insane. While we're on the subject of getting rid of people, why don't you take over Zapchat, Riglar is useless.
Colin Hulmes
Ashton-Under-Lyme
Lancs.
● *I decide who's insane and who isn't. Dillon stays till he irritates me too much. Same goes for the Wriggler. And what are you talking about the graphics look big n' blotchy? You're the insane one, get outta here!*

In the January edition of SU, Lee Cook sent a letter of complaint about the +3. I just want to say that I have had none of the loading and saving problems that he mentioned.
Steven Oswin
Denton
Northants
● *Why don't youse guys make up your minds? Some of you have problems, some of you don't! Kamikaze wants a final opinion.*

I am writing to let readers of SU know about a new fanzine that's about to hit the streets. It is, however, a fanzine with a difference. It's the fanzine on your screen! The zine is available on tape to **Tasword** owners and on thermal printer paper to people who don't have a copy. There is a slight difference in price because of this. The tape edition costs 50p and the printed edition is available at 80p. Anyone interested should send their money along with a blank tape, if the tape issue is requested, to the following address: Spectrum Monthly 28 Drumshantie Road, Gourock, Renfrewshire PA19 1SB. (no S.A.E. needed). There is a classified section too and if you'd like to send something to us for that or anything else for that matter then it's the same address. Up to 30 words are allowed in the classified section. All ads are free.
John Macinnes
Renfrewshire
Scotland

What does 'Humungous' mean? S'not in my dictionary.
Jon Klemenz
Worthing
West Sussex
● *OK, for once and for all, 'Humungous' means 'big'. So stop asking!!!*

I've got a bone to pick with you Mr 'Playschool Reject Fur Ball'. I am going to expose the scandal of the decade, or at least the scandal of the day.

You, Oh Brave Kamkikaze, are a wet nerd. Whilst fighting in Vietnam, you left you best friend Tiddles the Cat to be captured by the Viet Cong, and you betrayed the whereabouts of a band of pretty pink berets to the Cong to save your furry bottom. Well I'm going to get you Kamikaze Hamster. So there.
Colin Hayward (Sgt Imnotar Celtdecent to you)
Upminster
Essex
PS Print this letter, or I'll sell my story to the Star for 2 million quid and a packet of chewing gum.
● *Shows you know nothing about anything buster. Tiddles the Cat was a double agent informer, he wasn't captured, he defected. He was a yellowbelly, and the Cong are welcome to him. And anyone who chews gum is a nerd anyway.*



Psssst, went some money? Us old incorruptables at SU have got a crisp ten pound Um. . . cheque just waiting for you as reward for your contribution to a brand new feature called

PRAISE SU TO THE SKIES!!

All you have to do is write us the most over the top, excessive, fulsome, extravagent, extreme letter of praise we've ever seen. The most truly superlative each month will win ten pounds! Here's the sort of thing we mean:

To those wonderful, wonderful people at SU

Please tell me, are you human? There is no human on Earth that could write a magazine with the same instant appeal, the same quality, the same superb design and style that makes you go all. . .oooh. . . just by looking at it. I, for one, trust every single one of your reviewers and recently burnt down my local computer store because it stocked Ninja Nurses in the Ward of Doom which you rated 0.
Yours in extreme admiration,
A. Nonny-Mouse

Send your letter to:
"You really are totally fab and I'm not just saying that for the money" SU mega control, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU
Don't forget to include your name and address.

TELL I

Send your letters to 'Tell it to the Bear', SU Mega-Control, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU



Could I, through your page inform any Multiface or Datel Snapshot owners that by sending me a large SAE they can now get Issue 1 of INSTANT ACCESS, Multiface Poke Magazine, ABSOLUTELY FREE. The address is: Catherine Redgrave, 20 New Barton St., Salford, Manchester, M6 7WW
Catherine Redgrave
Salford
Manchester
● *OK doll, just this once*

As well as reading SU, I'm a keen Sci-Fi fan, and I began jumping up and down (carefully, so as not to damage my SU) when I read, **Trantor – The Last Stormtrooper** on the front cover. **Trantor** happens to be the name of a fictional planet in Isaac Asimov's *Foundation*, written in pre-Speccy 1941.

Bosconian is even worse. Mastertronic is obviously famished for original game titles, and has plundered E E 'Doc' Smith's Lenseman series of the early 70's, a Boskonian being someone from the planet Boskone. To protect themselves, Mastertronic changed the 'k' to 'c' and voilà. I think those responsible should suffer a nasty death.
Ian Ridley
St Neots
Cambridgeshire
● *Just shows what you know sunshine! Bosconian from Mastertronic was a licence. So go nuke the guys who did the coin-op!*



TO THE BEAR!





You got a comment? You got something to say? You got an opinion about what's good and bad. Wanna praise the mag? Wanna heap some indignation and kick a few butts? Don't keep it to yourself, just put your thoughts down on paper and TELL IT TO THE BEAR!

Kamikaze don't mess around. I'll print anything that got something to say with a name and address on it (No address no printy yellowbelly) you jus tell me all about it and send your message to 'Tell it to the Bear', SU Central, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU

What are you playing at, giving that bear a murderous name like Kamikaze, what's wrong with a name like Little Ted, or Big Ted from Playschool, nice, gentle names.

Also, why do you put a Jap sign on his head? Just because Kamikaze is a Jap word, you don't have to use that, why not a nice shiny Union Jack instead?

T Brearley
Wakefield
West Yorks

● *I don't believe I'm reading this! I'm not a nice, gentle bear, I'm a highly trained killer. And I'm a martial arts expert too, so in no way am I gonna wear a 'nice shiny Union Jack' on my head.*



I was reading your compilation thingy in Ish 70 when a thought occurred to me. Seeing as you're such a multi-talented bear, why not have a word with Ed Kelly about your writing a few reviews? I'm sure he wouldn't mind, expecially if you rammed a Colt .45 up his nose.

Richard Spencer
Retford
North Notts

● *Not a bad suggestion Ricky-boy, sadly the gun went off, but Kelly should make a full recovery. Still, he's off to pastures new. I've got some fresh ammunition, so where's that Taylor geezer?*

I am writing in response to the letter from Lee Cook, printed in your January 1988 column.

I bought a +3 for Christmas, and have also experienced a problem with sound distortion. The amount varied, but **Mutants** and **Nomad** (both disc) were very bad. Basically it seemed problems with the 3-channel intro-tunes, spot effects seemed OK.

I typed in the demo program (page 142 of the manual) and this was also badly distorted, so the fault must be inside the machine, either hardware or Rom based. Obviously I've sent off my guarantee slip, but if the problem is universal, there doesn't seem to be much point in changing machines.

The second part of Lee Cook's letter dealt with loading games from tape. At first I tried using my ordinary leads from my old Spectrum but I soon saw that you need a special input lead.

Using a cheap set of headphones, replacing the speakers with 3.5 mm jacks, I then tried to load from tape, and to my surprise, it worked. My success rate is around 95%.

Finally, a word about the +3 power supply. It's so big, I'm waiting for some workmen to come and build a brick wall around it.

Richard Flint
Edgbaston
Birmingham

● *I'm sending a squaddie to build a brick wall round you! Hope Flinty's managed to sort out some problems for the rest of you, stop you writing these boring letters.*

Hey, Kami! Give me five, on the side, up above, down below, Yo! All right!!

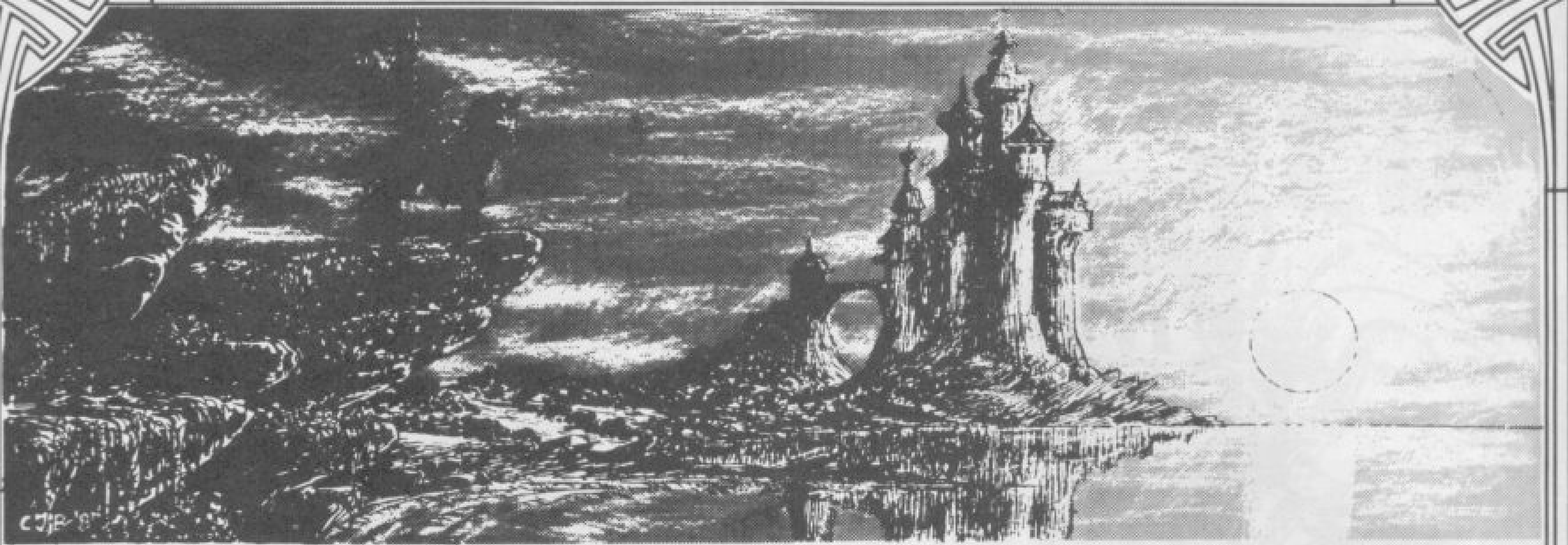
OK Kami, you don't mind me calling you Kami, do you? Oh, you do, OK, Mr Kamikaze, why, you are saying to yourself, has this berk written to you?

Well, I bought **Ultimate Combat Mission**, the game which all us trigger-happy-blast-em-to-bits-friend-or-foe get-the-hell-out-of-prison-any - which-way-you-can freaks will love (or love to hate), hastily loaded it, and began the **Great Escape II** automatically as Warmonger (death is my business, gold is my fee) blowing the weedy guards to smithereens until finally committing suicide by throwing myself to the Earth's surface.

Right, I thought, time for a stint as Mandroid (metal, electronics, flesh, blood and hate contraption). Problem. How to convert to Mandroid? I am asking you Kamikaze bear, to get the info from the infamous reviewer, Graham Taylor, any way you can, – the menu does not have a choice of character key. Oh, and say Vikings to the Mad Celt for me.

Paul Jones
Oldham
Lancs

● *First up, you leave the Celt alone. Anyone going to say Vikings to him, it's gonna be me. Second up, you try to 'give me five' again, I'll have you seen to. Third up, Ed. Taylor says that Mandroid only appears as the second player in 2 player mode.*



AVALON

THE KNIGHTS OF THE AVALON

The Chronicles of 'THE KNIGHTS OF THE AVALON' is a fantasy-based Play By Mail game from JADE Games, where players seek to establish, through trade, colonisation, politics, religion and conquest, empires.

For a free start up write to JADE Games with future turn costs from as little as 80p or ring 0705 828271 for an immediate start up.

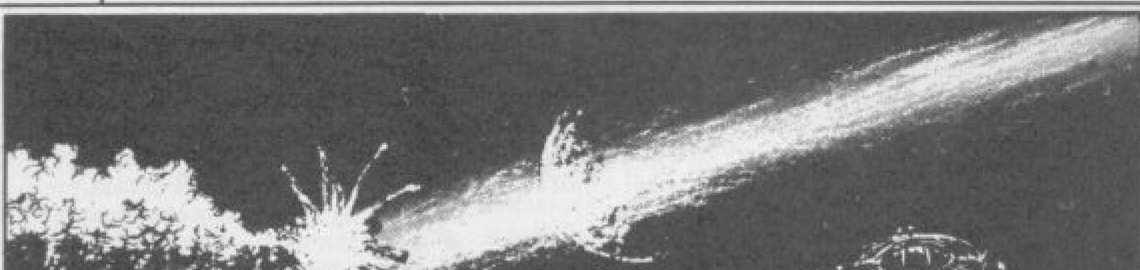
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For centuries your civilization has suspected the existence of intelligent life on other planets. Until now you could do no more than speculate about the mysterious radio signals that your scientists have occasionally intercepted. However with the recent development of the hyperjump engine, conditions have become right to reach out and attempt to create a NEW ORDER to link the stars. Will the dominant species in that NEW ORDER be yours, or that of some alien lifeform? In NEW ORDER you get the chance to find out!

NEW ORDER is a detailed game of space exploration, the rule book costs 3.00 (please don't request to play before reading the rules).





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The rogue moon Phosphor has almost destroyed life on the planet's surface – causing world wide earthquakes, flooding and volcanic activity.

SHATTERED WORLD is an excitng PBM GAME OF SURVIVAL. Startup costs 5.00, with further turns 1.50, includes postage both ways.

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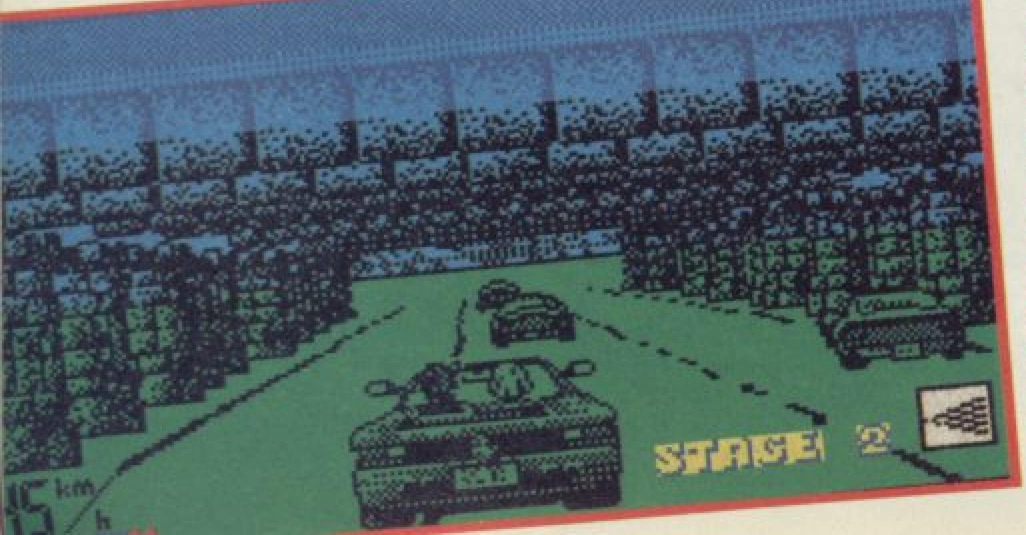
FULL PRICE 20

SINCLAIR USER

COMPILED BY GALLUP FOR SINCLAIR USER

		Title	Publisher / Price	Rating
1	NEW!	**OUTRUN** As close to the original as anyone could expect	US GOLD £8.95	8 STARS
2	NEW!	**MATCH DAY 2** A highly accurate football implementation	OCEAN £7.95	7 STARS
3	(1)	**COMBAT SCHOOL** Can Ocean do no wrong? Another corker	OCEAN £7.95	9 STARS
4	(4)	**GARY LINEKER'S SOCCER** Reasonable, though unremarkable strategy sim	GREMLIN £7.99	6 STARS
5	(2)	**SOLID GOLD** Good value package of '87	US GOLD £9.99	8 STARS
6	(8)	**LIVE AMMO** Well thought-out collection of classic games	IMAGINE £9.95	9 STARS
7	NEW!	**MAGNIFICENT 7** Good value compilation of licensed titles	OCEAN £9.95	8 STARS
8	(10)	**TEN PAK** Wonderful. Monty, Krakout, Avenger and many more	GREMLIN £9.99	9 STARS
9	(3)	**GAME, SET AND MATCH** Over 20 sports sims including most of the famous titles. Expensive though	OCEAN £12.95	8 STARS
10	(13)	**720°** US Gold's finest. Don't miss this one	US GOLD £8.99	10 STARS
11	NEW!	**ELITE COLLECTION** Reasonable collection of past hits	ELITE £14.95	8 STARS
12	NEW!	**CALIFORNIA GAMES** One of the best sports sims around	EPYX £8.95	8 STARS
13	(7)	**RENEGADE** Violent, beautifully animated conversion from the street-gang wars coin-op	OCEAN £8.95	8 STARS
14	(9)	**STAR WARS** Super conversion of the coin-op	DOMARK £9.95	8 STARS
15	(6)	**GUNSHIP** Highly impressive combat simulation. Enough action for non-simulation fans	MICROPROSE £9.95	9 STARS
16	(12)	**INDIANA JONES** Excellent conversion. Some quibbles but basically highly recommended	US GOLD £8.99	9 STARS
17	(5)	**THUNDERCATS** Marvellous graphics, brill sound and fiendish gameplay	ELITE £9.95	10 STARS
18	(14)	**COMPUTER HITS 10 VOL. 4** An excellent compilation. Fab.	BEAUJOLLY £9.99	10 STARS
19	(11)	**WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD** Just as good as the original	ACCESS £8.99	8 STARS
20	NEW	**SUPER HANG ON** An absolutely superb conversion.	ELECTRIC DREAMS £9.99	10 STARS

▼ IN THE TOP SLOT: OUTRUN



HOT FULL PRICE—

Hovering outside the twenty is Incentive's Driller the 3-D arcade strategy all about searching for oil. You can expect the multi-load coin-op conversion Gryzor to blast into next month's top ten, and we'll be surprised if US Gold's epic Gauntlet 2 doesn't make it into the top five.



▲HOT: GAUNTLET 2



▲ HOT: DRILLER

1	OUTRUN
2	COMBAT SCHOOL
3	SOLID GOLD
4	LIVE AMMO
5	MAGNIFICENT 7

1	GHOST HUNTERS
2	PLAY IT AGAIN SAM
3	DEAD OR ALIVE
4	VAMPIRE
5	RIGEL'S REVENGE

1	GRAND PRIX SIMULATOR
2	ATV SIMULATOR
3	FRUIT MACHINE SIMULAT
4	GARY LINEKER'S SOCCER
5	PROFESSIONAL SKI SIMU

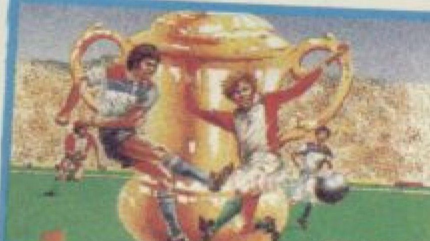
CHART COMMENT – FULL PRICE

The full-price chart is a thrill-a-minute affair, with seven of the top ten coming in as new entries. Five of them, including the new number one Combat School are from the Ocean/US Gold empire, while good showings are made by SU Classic Thundercats from Elite, and Domark's hotly-tipped conversion of the Star Wars coin-op. Overall, a good spread of simulations, compilations, arcade titles and strategy games which may indicate that the traditionally quiet February/March period is evolving into a pretty darn whizzy time of the year.

SU CHARTS

HOT BUDGET —

Very little movement in this month's top ten, but re-releases such as Park Patrol **are bubbling under. Still a huge emphasis on sorting simulations, with** Kick Boxing, Pro Golf **and** Football Manager **all crowding into the budget top fifty.**



▲ HOT: FOOTBALL MANAGER



▲HOT: PARK PATROL

BUDGET 10

1	(1)	**GRAND PRIX SIMULATOR** Superb follow-up to BMX Simulator. Reminiscent of Super Sprint	**CODE MASTERS £1.99**	8 STARS
2	(3)	**ATV SIMULATOR** Cheap and friendly little simulator, not great but OK	**CODE MASTERS £1.99**	6 STAR
3	(2)	**FRUIT MACHINE SIMULATOR** Surprisingly, the whole thing is idiotically addictive	**CODE MASTERS £1.99**	8 STARS
4	(5)	**PRO SKI SIMULATOR** An old idea played in a new way. Definitely masterly code	**CODE MASTERS £1.99**	8 STARS
5	(6)	**DIZZY** Once you get cracking, you'll never lay it down for a minute	**CODEMASTERS £1.99**	9 STARS
6	(8)	**BACK TO THE FUTURE** Budget re-release, good for five or six minutes	**FIREBIRD £1.99**	4 STARS
7	(4)	**JOE BLADE** A kind of scrolling arcade adventure with elements to please everybody	**PLAYERS £1.99**	8 STARS
8	(9)	**BMX SIMULATOR** It's a genuine simulation – a biker's paradise with smooth slippery action	**CODE MASTERS £1.99**	10 STARS
9	(7)	**SOCCER BOSS** Really awful rival for Football Manager. Don't even think about it	**ALTERNATIVE £1.99**	1 STARS
10	*NEW!*	**TRAP DOOR** Well-liked arcade adventure rereleased on budget	**ALTERNATIVE £1.99**	8 STARS

ARCADE

OCEAN
OCEAN
US GOLD
US GOLD
OCEAN

ADVENTURE

CODE MASTERS
MASTERTONIC
CODE MASTERS
CODE MASTERS
MASTERTRONIC

SIMULATION

	CODE MASTERS
	CODE MASTERS
T OR	CODE MASTERS
R	GREMLIN GRAPHICS
UL ATOR	CODEMASTERS

CHART COMMENT – BUDGET

Booooooringgggg! This month's budget top ten bears a strange resemblance to last month's, with the Simulators **from Codemasters jostling for the top spot and everything else sliding in between them. At the moment the little Darlings are dominating the budget chart both in quality and quantity; Mastertronic, Firebird, Players and Alternative are battling it out with a pretty dull mixture of re-released full-price titles, unremarkable platforms-and-ladders games and sports sims. Expect plenty of change next month, though, when the Ricochet re-releases start to make a big impression.**

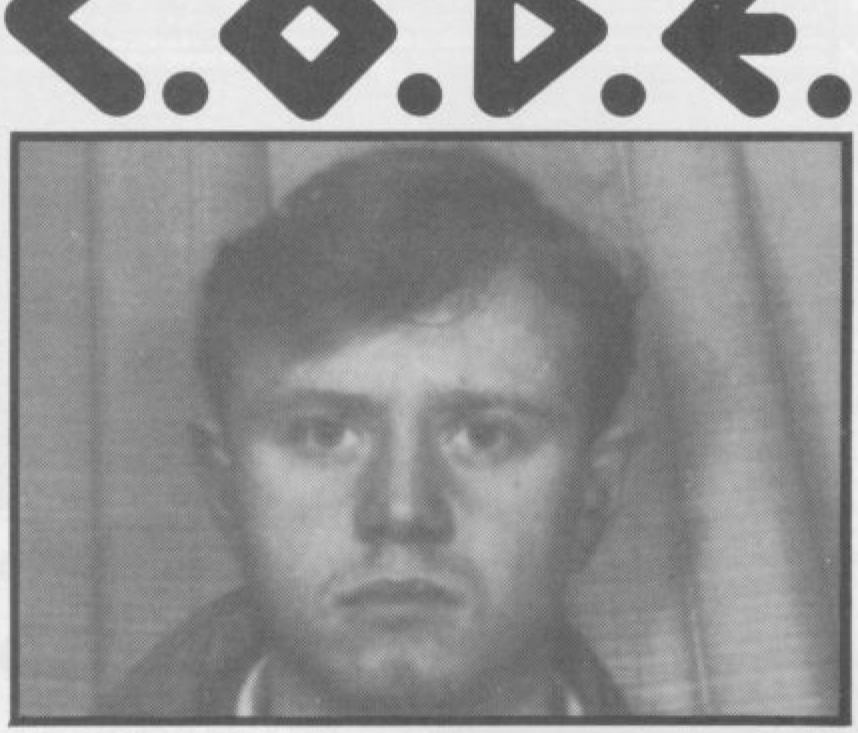
▼ IN THE TOP SLOT: GRAND PRIX SIMULATOR.





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C.O.D.E. T.A.L.K.



PETER JONES

Peter Jones was a thoroughly unknown name outside the insular world of Mirrorsoft until** Tetris **appeared last month. It was hailed by many as "a bleedin' miracle" and even the more reserved reviewers around have said that it's pretty great. In a sleazy cafe in the East of London, Jones drank coffee and hung-out, dishing the dirt on the industry and his personal life. It was a story many refused to carry, but we knew it was an interview that had to be printed. OK, OK, so we rang him up and asked him a few lightweight questions. So I lied, all right?

How did** Tetris **come about?
It was invented by a Russian bloke, in fact. We saw the PC version that he produced about a year ago, I played it for a while, and got really hooked. When I found there was going to be a Spectrum version, I persuaded John Cook to let me have a go.

What was your first computer, then?
The ZX81, I'm afraid. I saved up for ages and finally got myself a Sepctrum. I was learning COBOL at college, and I was sent to Mirrorsoft on Work Experience, and I got stuck, I suppose.

FIVE ALL-TIME FAVOURITE GEOMETRICAL SHAPES
5 pointed stars
Squares
Spheres
Figure '8'
Triangles

Who do you admire?
Not many people, in fact. Tony Crowther has been around for ages, and he's a really nice bloke. Then of course I've got to admire John Cook simply for the things he manages to get away with.

What sort of games are you into? I guess you're a bit of the old strategy thinky side.
Yes. I like things like **Balance of Power** and stuff like that. I play lots of stuff on the Amiga these days. They're a bit expensive, though, unless you get a pretty battered secondhand one like me.

You're becoming in danger of sounding a bit intellectual. What was the last book you read?
Of Time and Stars by Arthur C. Clarke. I read it on the way to the Which Computer Show. It's a collectin of all his best stuff.

Who's the person who you have most trouble stomaching on TV/Radio etc?
Terry Wogan. I try not to watch much TV anyway.

FIVE ALL-TIME BRILLIANT FILMS THAT I COULD BEAR TO WATCH AGAIN
Blade Runner
The Killing Fields
Star Wars
Party Party!
High Society

What sort of cars do you like?
I don't drive, actually. I never really got around to learning. If I were to have one, though, an XR4 Cosworth would be nice. But that's just dreaming. I'd probably end up with a Fiat 126 or something equally horrendous.

XR4 Cosworth, eh? You sound a bit of a trendy. What about your clothes? Where do you get them from?
Oh anywhere. I'm not really into designer stuff, I refuse to pay forty quid for a label. The only thing that I am quite sensitive about is flares, I just won't wear flares. And I like boxer shorts. Usually ones from BHS with nice patterns on.

What sort of animal are you?
What a peculiar question. I don't really know the answer to that one. I must say I love tigers though, perhaps that makes me some sort of cat. I suppose that's about the closest. I eat, sit and think, and that's fairly close to the average cat's behaviour. My cat Lucy, who's black and white, behaves like that all the time.

What sort of magazines do you read?
I'll ready anything that strikes me as interesting. I do read the computer press, but I like to keep a whole range. I quite like the Sunday magazines too, the ones that you get free with the papers.

Drinkies? Are you a drinking man?
I've been known to go to the pub, yes, but never at lunchtime, I don't drink at lunchtime. My usual tipple is Guinness with a whiskey chaser, and there's a rather evil drink called Beamish, but that's pretty serious stuff.

And food, are you a big food fan?
Yup, I love Chinese food, and also traditional British cooking, like steak and kidney pie and stuff.

Who's your favourite cartoon carac?
I'm a big fan of Tom and Jerry, any of the old 50s cartoon character, all the Warner stuff. And Speedy Gonzales, he's great.

And for your final serious question, what's the popular phrase that you hate most?
'Literally by the skin of his teeth.'



And then, in order to find out what Peter Jones was really like, we asked him to compile some charts of his most, and least favourite things. The answers came up something like this.....

FIVE LEAST FAVOURITE FILMS IN THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE
Rambo
The Ironmaster
The Beast with 5 Fingers
The Wild Women of Wongo
The Wicked Lady

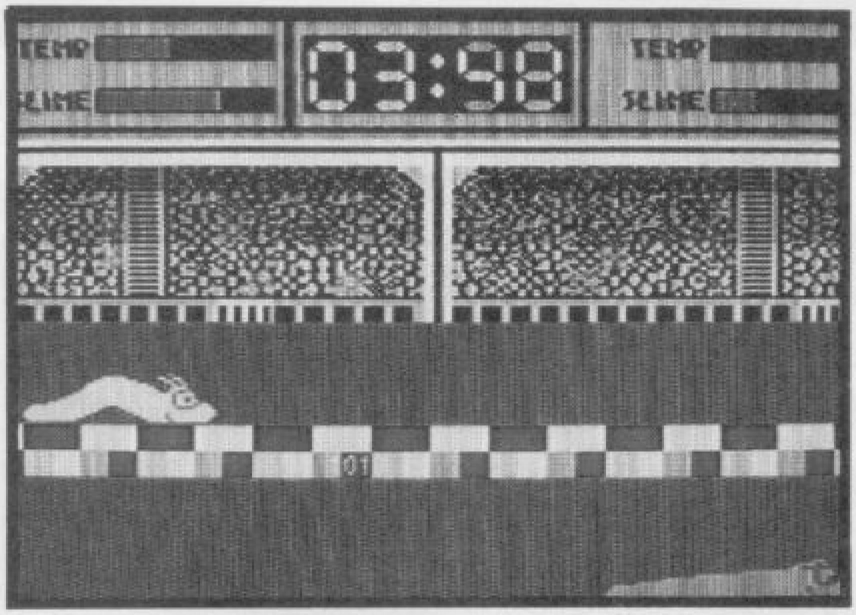
FIVE BEST EVER GAMES ON THE SPECTRUM
Lunar Jetman
Andy Capp
Zynaps
Shadowfire
Manic Miner

SOFTOGRAPHY
Compiled the loaders for: ***Biggles, Meanstread Tatris*** *(Mirrorsoft, 1988).*

O K, so it's a multi-event game. All right, so it's a multi-load multi-event game, but **Galactic Games** tries very hard to be different. It's basically the ancient Olympic events idea exhumed and turned into a comedy. There are five events, played against the computer or an opponent, each one struggling to be the silliest game idea of all.

Each event is preceded by a piece of text, presented by Harry, your friendly flying eyeball. A nice touch, but after a while the puns begin to irritate.

The 100m slither is ridiculous. Two undulating worms battle it out for the finishing line whilst regulating slime excretion



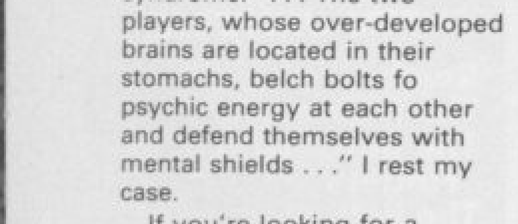
GALACTIC GAMES

levels and body temperature. Hmmm. It's fast, the animation is very funny, but it's not as easy as it sounds (and it doesn't sound very easy, does it?!)

Coming up hard on slither's heels, it's hockey time folks, with eyeballs for players, black holes for goals and a living, breathing puck who doesn't like being pushed around. The characters are all lovingly animated, especially Mr Puck! The playing area scrolls, and it's easy to lose yourself off the edge of the screen. Very silly, and just as difficult to control as the worms.

Psychic Judo is a bit of a let down. In a flurry of silly ideas the gameplay seems to have been left behind. Two windows show opponent's eye views of the players, and each tries to destroy the other by firing little thingies. (Not quite sure what they are, thingies is as close a description as I can get). The graphics are boring, and it's all so fast that it's too often a case of the "what-was-that-noise-oh-dear-I-seem-to-have-died" syndrome. ". . . The two players, whose over-developed brains are located in their stomachs, belch bolts fo psychic energy at each other and defend themselves with mental shields . . ." I rest my case.

If you're looking for a completely silly idea, what better than Head Throwing?



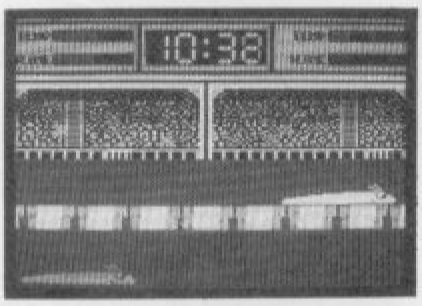
FACTS BOX

Intends to amuse, and succeeds, but I have serious doubts about its long term interest

GALACTIC GAMES
Label: Activision
Authors: Tigress Designs
Price: £9.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Timothy Closs.

★★★☆☆ · ★★★☆☆ **6**



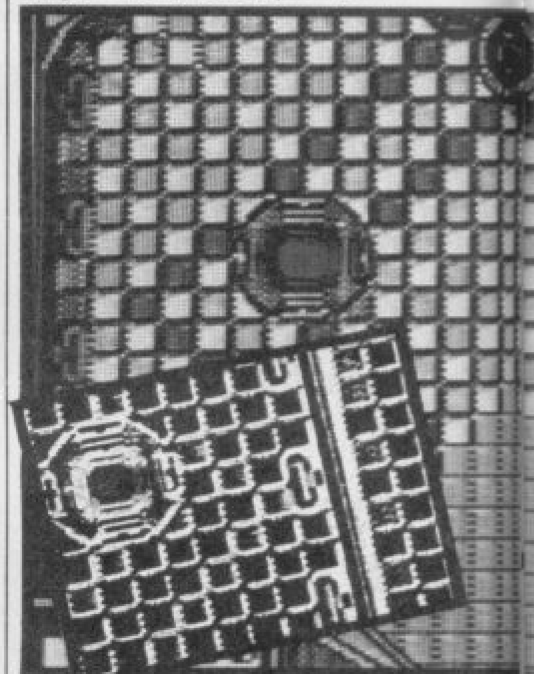
This time we've dispensed with complex technicalities and reverted to that old favourite, the "who can throw their head the farthest" contest. Get a good run-up, angle the head properly and go for it. Frantic ear flapping gives extra height, and the head must be tipped forward for a nasal touchdown. After a throw, the body runs off to put its head back on. The graphics are chunky, but large and, again, well animated. This is the best of the bunch – it involves the most skill, and has got to be the funniest.

Finally, how about a Metamorph Marathon? A flip-screen terrain must be negotiated in a race against the clock. Luckily, being a metamorph, you can mutate into one of four beings to aid your plight; runner, burrower, jumper or flyer. Running and flying requires a bit of wicked joystick waggling, whilst jumping is a more skilled affair. The characters are nice, but sadly, backgrounds are bery dull and I soon lost interest.

It's obvious that a lot of time and effort has been put into **Galactic Games.** It's well programmed, excellently presented and has a lot of well thought out, original ideas, However, as with many comparable games, there's simply not enough action to hold your interest, with short bursts of play interrupted by long delays. ■

bedlam

U S Gold, it has to be said, is a constant source of confusion to me. **Bedlam** isn't a licence deal, it isn't a film, in fact it's not a tie-in of any description. In fact, if it wasn't for the fact that there isn't a single innovation anywhere in



the program, you could call it original.

In the Umpteenth Century, fighter pilots are sent through the X12 simulator as a final stage in their training. The machine – known as **Bedlam** – simulates the toughest, roughest down-right nastiest combat experience they are ever likely to face.

Bedlam, surprisingly, is a space shoot-out.

INTERNATION

C hop! Slash! Kick! Gouge! And why not! Combat games seem to be coming back into style, if anything; just when you thought it was safe to change out of your pyjamas, **International Karate Plus** nuts you from behind.

FACTS BOX

A decent beat-'em-up which doesn't really add anything to an already overloaded section of the games market

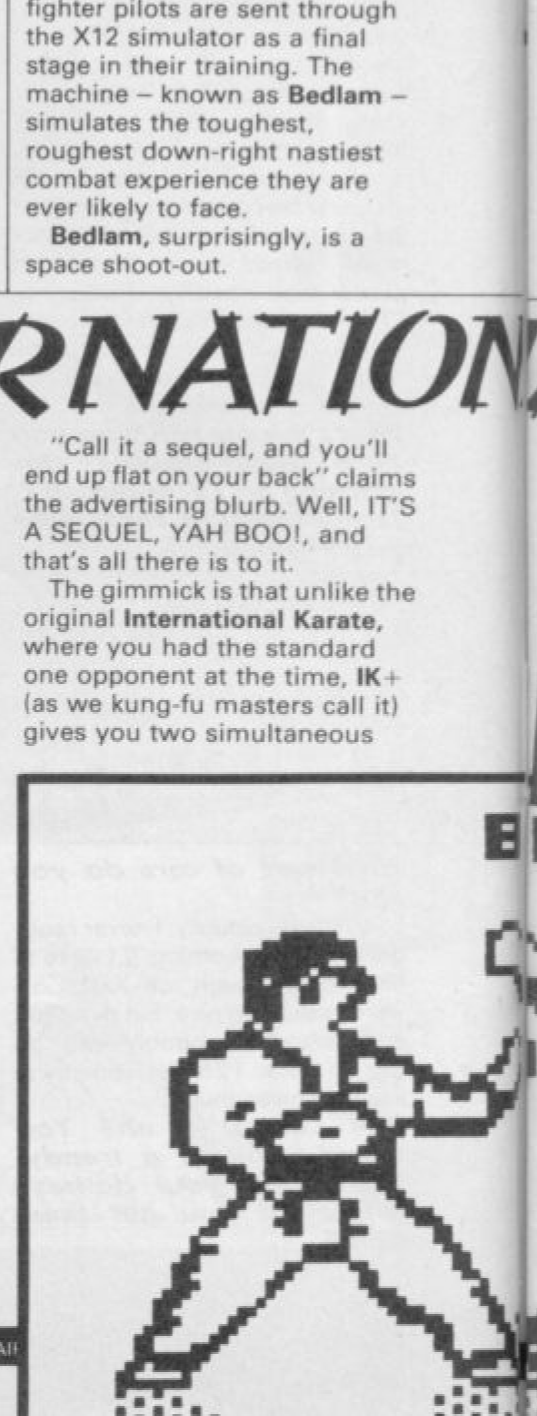
INTERNATIONAL KARATE PLUS
Label: System 3
Authors: Archer Maclean
Price: £7.95
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Chris Jenkins

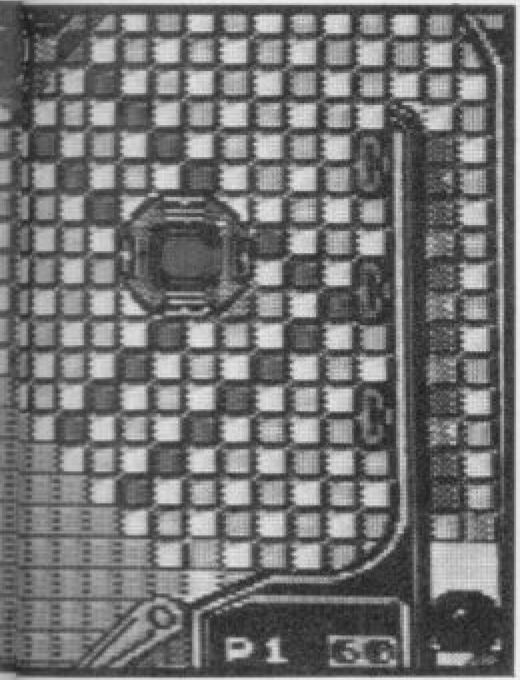
★★★★☆ ★★★☆☆ **7**

"Call it a sequel, and you'll end up flat on your back" claims the advertising blurb. Well, IT'S A SEQUEL, YAH BOO!, and that's all there is to it.

The gimmick is that unlike the original **International Karate,** where you had the standard one opponent at the time, **IK+** (as we kung-fu masters call it) gives you two simultaneous



ARCADE ★ REVIEW



It looks like a predecessor to **Lightforce**, void of the advances in graphics and gameplay. When you consider that **Bedlam** is 128K only, and over a year longer in the making, this isn't really on.

You pilot a small craft toward the top of an apparently endless scrolling landscape, attacked – as ever – by apparently endless screaming hordes of aliens.

Your ship moves around at an uncomfortably rapid rate, making precision flying virtually impossible.

There are nice touches; the aliens dive and swoop in quite exciting patterns, and the action is fast. There is also a very peculiar – though admittedly surprising – feature. If you fly over the letter "T", the screen will change and you'll find yourself in a bonus section which is, in fact, a game of pinball. Quite what this has to do with being trained for cosmic dogfighting I can't see.

There is a two-player option, too, allowing pilots to co-operate in fending off the bad guys. Yes. You have seen this feature before in **Executor**.

Bedlam is definitely competent, undoubtedly addictive but equally it is unoriginal bordering on the plagiaristic, and graphically no great shakes. You can pretty much make up your mind from the screenshots.

FACTS BOX

Fast but unoriginal. Difficult but not very challenging. Bedlam it may be, new it isn't

BEDLAM
Label: Go!
Author: Beam Software
Price: £8.99
Memory: 128K only
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Jim Douglas

★★★★☆
★★★☆☆ **7**

AL KARATE +





opponents to demolish, either one computer-controlled and a second player using the keyboard, or both computer-controlled.

As the sun sinks slowly in the background, your task is to do as much damage as possible in each thirty-second round. As usual, there are sixteen different moves controlled by joystick or keyboard, including back flips, face kicks, low sweeps, stomach punches and the "Glasgae Kiss", the auld heidbutt.

Scores are awarded according to the viciousness of your attack; 800 for a Front Face Punch, for example, but only, 100 for a Stomach Kick from behind. I should think so too. You also get "combat points" displayed as coloured discs, and the first player to attain six points wins the round. The player with the smallest score is then O-U-T spells out. Not a bad effort, then, but unlikely to create new fans for this type of game.

TWILIGHT

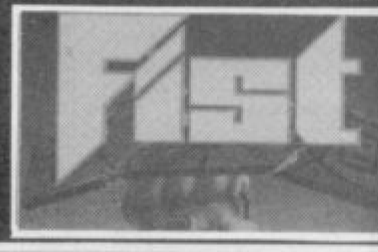
WAY OF THE EXPLODING FIST

ARCADE Label: **Ricochet** Author: **??? ?????** Price: **£1.99** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **various** Reviewer: **Chris Jenkins**

The first, and arguably still the best, two-player combat game. If you've not seen it, rush out and get it chop-chop

Re-releases of full price hits are rarely more welcome than this one. Way of the Exploding Fist was the first two-player martial arts simulation, and in its simplicity is arguably still the most enjoyable.

Two nicely-animated warriors face each other against a series of colourful oriental backgrounds. Each has sixteen moves available ranging from throat chops to flying kicks. Your player automatically blocks offensive moves if you are in defend mode and blows are accompanied by muffled cries and thuds. Nice little touches include opponents bowing to each other before the bout, the stern judge sitting in the background, and the expressions of agony as your opponent is hacked about the shins, make this a must buy■



★★★★★
★★★★☆ **9**

STI

ADVENTURE Label: **Bug Byte** Author: **Roy Stead** Price: **£2.99** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **none** Reviewer: **Tony Dillon**

Text only adventure with disjointed flow and a lot of snippets of pathetic humour

What do you do when a super computer goes haywire and promises World War 3? No, it's not a song title, it's the plot of STI, the latest from Bug Byte. What you do is you take your gear and go and fix the computer, and the only reason you do it is because you get promised a lot of money. Some people.

The game is quite large, with a large vocabulary, and the locations are varied and interestingly written, though the 'humour' (I use the word advisedly) is thin and generally a kind of one-on-one between the programmer and the punter, it's written chatty, but not actually funny.



The game has no flow to it, and as far as I can see, the only way anyone is to complete it is more or less by complete luck. Plainly, I don't like it very much and I can't see anything that would keep any adventure player hooked■

★★☆☆☆
★☆☆☆☆ **3**

3D STARFIGHTER

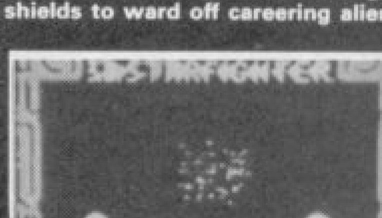
ARCADE Label: **Codemasters** Author: Price: **£1.99** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **various** Reviewer: **Chris Jenkins**

A superficially enjoyable space shoot-'em-up which lacks depth and soon palls

A Big disappointment after the heady excitement of the Oliver Twins' previous offerings Grand Prix Simulator **and** Pro Ski Simulator. **This is a Star Trek-style game in which you travel through different time zones of the universe, shooting up aliens and . . . er . . . shooting up more aliens.**

At the start of each level you must dock with a mother ship with the aid of your radar scanner. Apart from that, the only gimmick is that your energy levels fall as you shoot, so you must conserve your laser energy and make very sparing use of your shields to ward off careering alien fighters.

Some nice perspective effects as the alien ships and missiles zoom towards you, the usual "hyper-space" sequence, and some nifty voice samples, don't do much to lift 3-D Starfighter **above average■**



★★★☆☆
★★☆☆☆ **5**

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DEVIANTS

ARCADE REVIEW

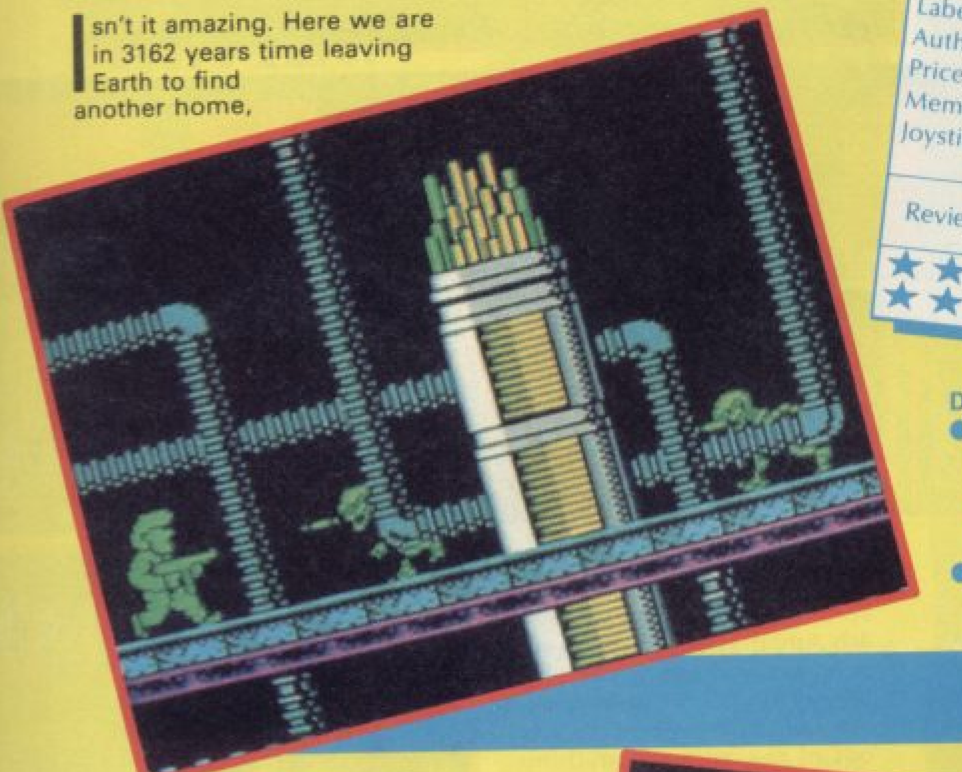
FACTS BOX

Deviants is a game that would be more than acceptable in the over £7 area, and is a real bargain in on budget

DEVIANTS
Label: Players
Author: Colin Swinbourne
Price: £1.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Tony Dillon

★★★★★★★★★☆ 9





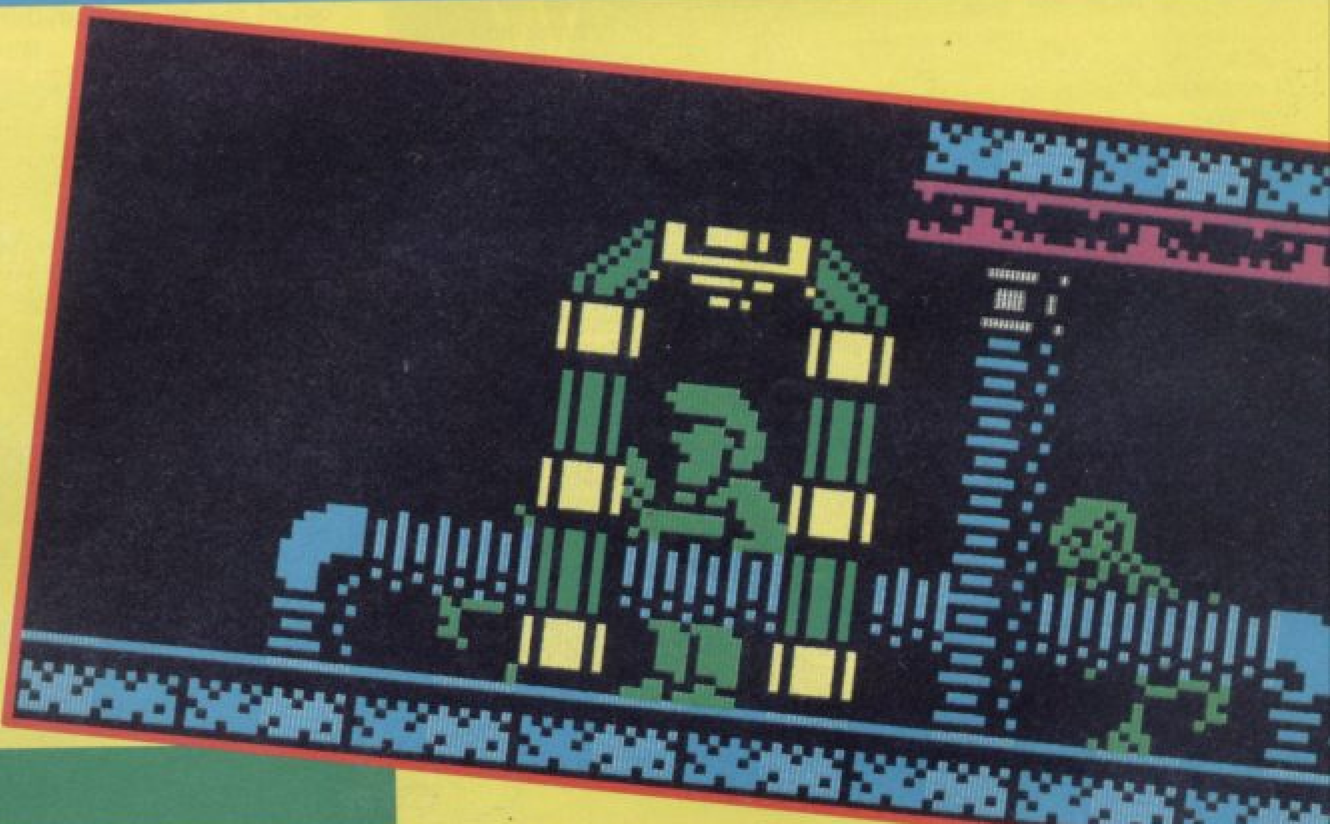
Deviants tips

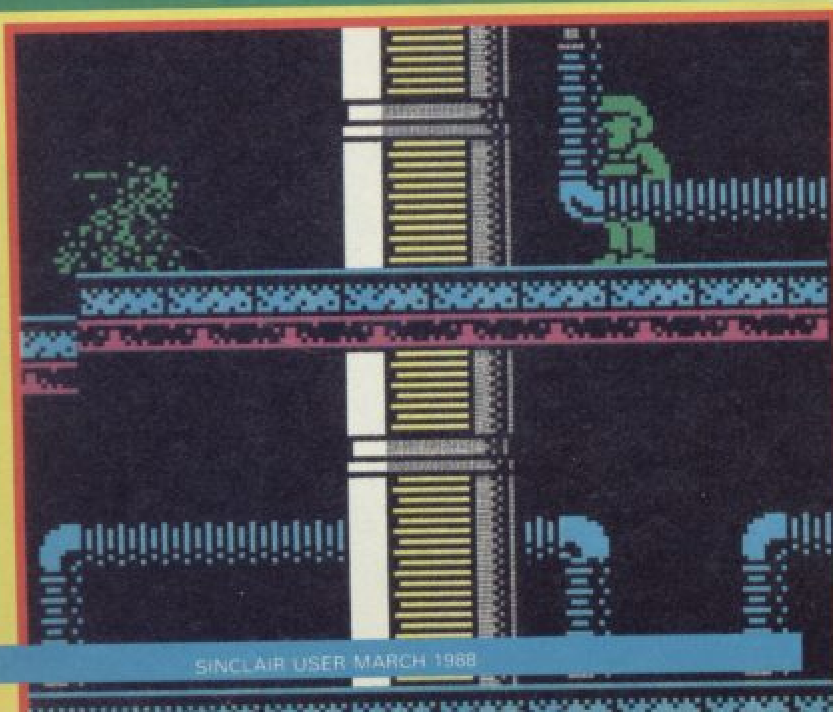
- When on the tall poles that rotate (for example, the start position) pull down and you can then use it as a transporter.
- Don't be afraid to fall from great heights. This can't kill you.
- Don't just run past aliens. Once you destroy the aliens in a screen they don't come back, so kill all you can. It saves energy for when you go back that way.
- Don't bother to use the roll. It's a waste of time and you can't shoot from the floor.

Isn't it amazing. Here we are in 3162 years time leaving Earth to find another home, and where are we going? The planet Krauze that's where. Great. Krauze is not so dull as it sounds enough being loaded with mysterious artefacts telling us all about an evil race of Deviants that lived on Krauze in the dim past.

Guess what? The Deviants want their planet back and have returned with a giant battle station. . .

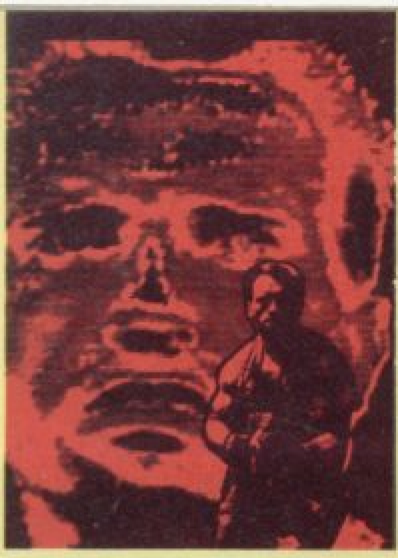
You are a Starwarrior, and quite a well defined one at that. You run between the flipping screens and prime all the bombs, no mean feat, I promise you. The bombs are positioned in arch-like things which, if not primed, won't let you through. In all locations are a couple of these little green aliens, which, when they touch you, sap your energy. Scattered round the place are all manner of little bibs and bobs to help you. There are spare bullets on the floor, a la **Dan Dare,** and also these little cubicles which, replenish your energy.





The graphics are wicked, background, fore grounds, everything. All of the graphics are good. The backgrounds are made up of pipes and metallic looking platforms, which really add to the mood of the game. The graphics for the sprites are beautifully detailed. The main sprite has a face, for example, and the aliens look very familiar. I wouldn't be surprised if Ripley turned up somewhere. . .

Up to this point, the game has been really simple, but now it's time the hard part in the game showed it's face. The priming of the bombs is very hard, I tell you. You are shown a row of 6 valves, which are either open (glowing and oscillating) or closed (dull and oscillating.) Using the keys 1 to 6 you have to get all the valves open, a la V. You know, key 1 changes valves 1 and 4 etc. What makes it really hard is that you have a very short time limit to do your stuff, and the chances of getting the night combination of keys seems like one in a thousand. Still, I like a challenge■



A Russell.

Q What do you call a man in a paper suit?

PROGRAMMERS

SOURCE are the people behind **Predator.** In this case, James Fisher and "a guy called Bryn" handled the Spectrum version with James handling all the code, and Bryn being in charge of the pictures. It took the team about two and a half months to complete, and it's their first commercial product. Can't be a bad sign of things to come.



PREDAT

Oh dear oh dearie me. What is it about human nature that makes otherwise nice, considerate, caring human beings (like myself) so incredibly susceptible to playing computer games that involve running around without a shirt, waving a machine gun around like a conductor's baton and blasting holes in everything that breathes? There's certainly something a little worrying about the fact that I haven't enjoyed a game quite as much as **Predator** in ages.

Maybe it's the chance to live out the ultimate male role; muscle-bound, good looking, tough, smart. Not that I'm devoid of any of these in real life (Snigger -Ed).

Well, that could be it, but I have a sneaking suspicion that it's because Activision have produced one of the most playable licence games from the ideal film for computer conversion. In short, **Predator** is no poor show.

Everything in the game is pretty closely related to the film's storyline (see review in **Outlands** – 66-67) so I won't go into too much detail.

You – Major Dutch Schaeffer – (Arnold) – and a team of men are flown into a particularly dense part of the South American jungle on a mission to rescue a number of hostages from communist guerrilas, only to find yourself in deadly combat with a 7' alien with metallic dreadlocks whose idea of fun is to total homo sapiens.

You begin the game sliding down to the jungle floor from your chopper – ooer (oh good grief – get a grip) and your men go stomping off into the jungle. You're last on ground and you survey the apparently peaceful scene for a couple of seconds; nice graphics. Side-on representation, dense, atmospheric foilage at the back. Not looking too bad. Let's try moving around. Oh. I say. Very nice. The animation is great; you really get an impression that you're controlling a stocky, heavy character.

Oh, hello. We've got company. Lots of guys in black peaked caps. I'm not sure I like the look of them. Yup, I was right. They blew me to bits. These must be the guerrillas. Time to break out the artillery, I guess.

This is more like it. You can really spray the whole area by pushing the joystick round in an arc. Bad guys are buying it by the tree-load. This is easy! Oh. I've run out of ammunition. And I was doing so well. Looks like hand to hand combat for a while – urph! Take that!

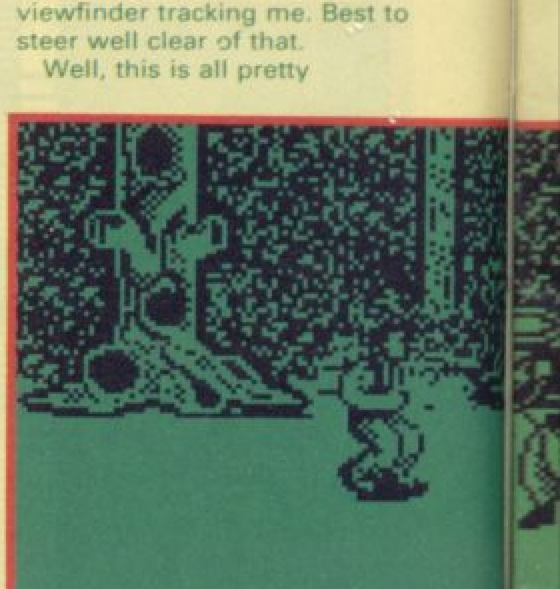
Hints and Tips

- **Conserve those bullets! spraying away like it's the 4th July may be fun, but you need every shot you can get.**
- **Weave across the screen, using diagonal motion to get out of the path of anything hostile.**
- **When you are firing, don't be afraid to blaze away when necessary. There isn't time to aim each shot. If you get a cluster of guys, you're better to just loose a burst.**
- **When the alien's tracker beam comes up, keep running! It's easy to escape if you act quickly enough.**
- **Watch out for hidden bad guys lurking in the dirt or up trees.**





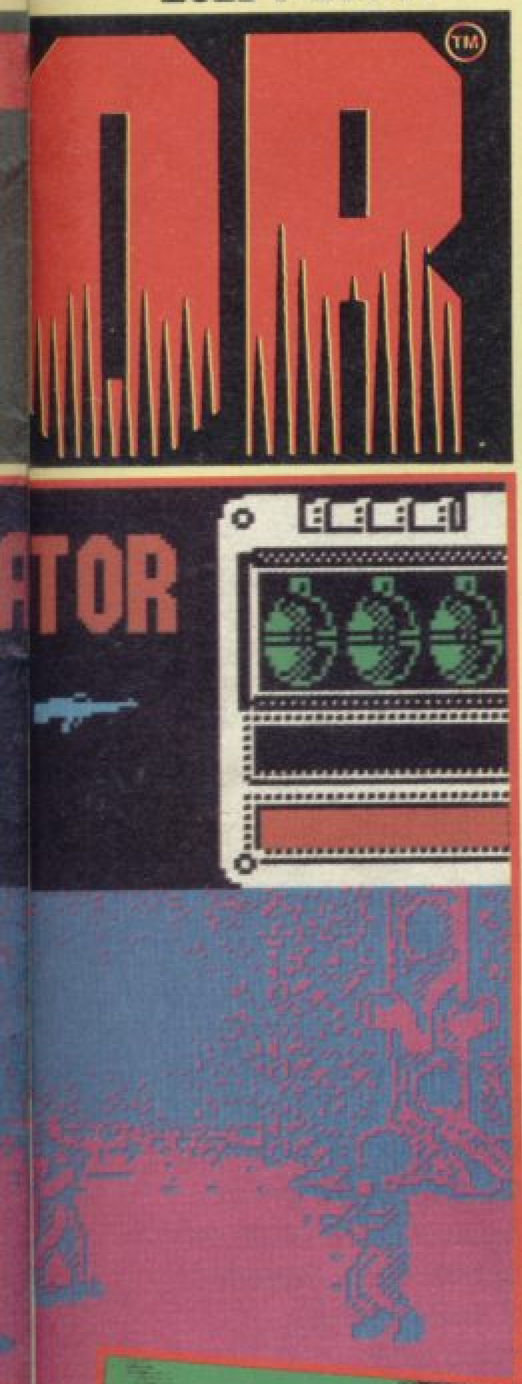




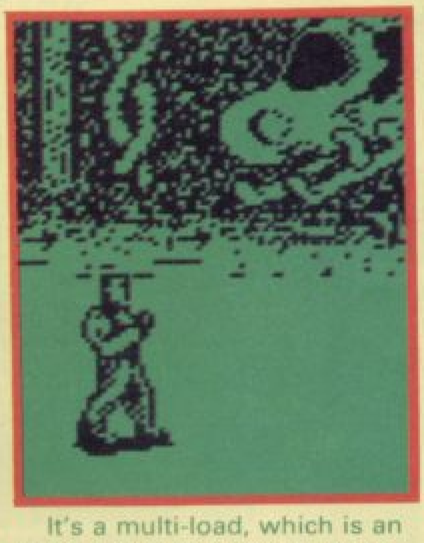
Oo-er. The screen's gone all bluey-pink, and this triangle has appeared. What's going on? This must be the alien's viewfinder tracking me. Best to steer well clear of that.

Well, this is all pretty

ARCADE REVIEW



marvellous. There are four stages to get through, each leading ever-closer to the final confrontation with the ugly s.o.b. himself. After the first stage, you find yourself in the guerrilla village, then you've got to collect all of the appropriate weapons and protection necessary for the last bit.



It's a multi-load, which is an irritant, but let's face it, that's the only thing wrong with the whole game.

Predator is great. It's fast and violent and very tricky indeed. The atmosphere of the film has been captured well, with lots of victims looking all yucky and dead■

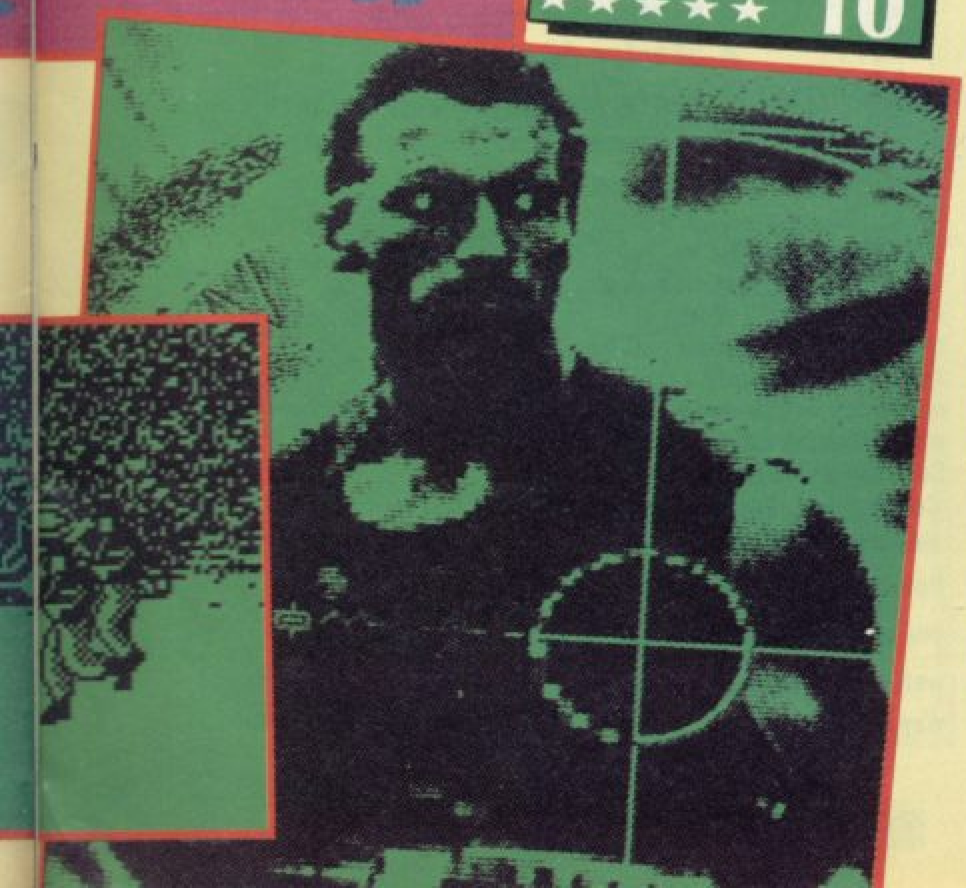
FACTS BOX

The most solid movie conversion Short Circuit, only less sickly sweet. As close to macho as most people will ever get

PREDATOR
Label: Activision
Authors: Source
Price: £9.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Jim Douglas

★★★★★ ★★★★★ 10



TWILIGHT

SPACE SHUTTLE

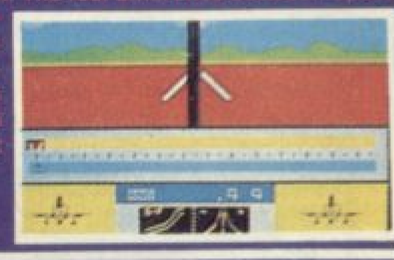
SIMULATION Label: **Firebird** Author: **Activision** Price: **£1.99** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **various** Reviewer: **Chris Jenkins**

Unusual budget flight simulator, nicely balancing the demands of realism with arcade-style excitement

Now that the NASA shuttle programme is in the doldrums, Firebird's budget simulation may be the closest you'll get to seeing some space exploration on the small screen.

Space Shuttle is a fairly straightforward simulation, originally an Activision full-price title. Your aim is to rendevouz with an erratically-orbiting satellite (try saying that after a pint of booster fuel), and return to each as many times as you can before your supplies run out. Graphics are uncluttered, with a through-the-cockpit view and control displays which change according to mission phase.

Demo, automatic, and full mission modes give you the chance to practise before the big day, and a selection of propulsion options and telemetry displays add to the realism. The real difference between Space Shuttle and any other flight simulator is the contrast it gives between pure space navigation and the business of making a desert landing in heavy crosswinds. If you missed this one first time around, check it out now■



★★★★☆ ★★★☆☆ 7

MERLIN

ARCADE Label: **Firebird** Author: **Mike Westlake** Price: **£1.99** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **various** Reviewer: **Chris Jenkins**

Stunningly pretty arcade adventure, worth seeking out just to see the giant spiders

While Merlin is a dead standard multi-screen jumping-and-ducking effort, for £1.99 it's worth getting just for the novelty of the giant-sized graphics.

Guiding Merlin the wizard around the magic Castle Camelot is made difficult by the hordes of brain-sucking starfish, enchanted books, wiggling ghosts and wriggly snakes. A disintegrating cross indicated your falling life-force as you collide with the nasties, and all you can do is jump over them or duck under them, no mean feat since the Merlin figure is one of the biggest sprites I've ever seen! The backgrounds are beautifully detailed, with suits of armour, bookcases, stairways, battlements and cellars depicted in painstaking detail. The colours are great too, but this unfortunately leads to lots of attribute clash when Merlin walks past the larger objects.



Since you don't have to do anything with the stars, and you can't shoot the nasties, the charm of the game might pall fairly quickly; but it looks pretty, and I suppose that's as good a reason as any for forking out your £1.99■

★★★☆☆ ★★★☆☆ 6

CHAOS

STRATEGY Label: **Firebird** Price: **£1.99** Author: **Julian Glossop** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **none** Reviewer: **Tony Dillon**

Enjoyable multi-usery, magical wargamery type of game and a bargain at the price

I'm all for simple games concepts, and Chaos, the Battle of Wizards has one of the simplest yet. To summarise, take a black square (eg a burnt field), and stick in it a number of wizards, between say 2 and 8. Give each wizard different ratings for attack, defence, you know, all the usual Games Workshop sort of stuff. On top of all this, each wizard has a number of spells with which to destroy all the other wizards. That is it.

Since as I am as good at games as a deranged goat, I like games that make it easy, and Chaos is very easy to play. You cycle through a couple of menus to select your spell and when told to move your character(s) just position the cursor over the piece you wish to move and move it. Why characters? Some of the spells allow you to create magical and mythical beasts, like manticores and gryphons, to aid you in your fight.

To put it simply, Chaos is great. It's colourful, it's very easy to play, and above all it's probably the most fun you've had since you pickled your granny■



★★★★☆ ★★★★☆ 8

ZONE

COMPETITION

Now let's get one thing straight from the start. This is no ordinary competition. You're used to Sinclair User giving away good prizes, even great prizes. But for this competition it had to stop. The winner of our Predator competition won't get a great prize. It won't even be a good prize. It will, quite simply, be the best prize we've ever offered. If you don't get excited about this, you should be seriously thinking about having your head examined.

Because, thanks to the incredible generosity of the people at Activision, we've got





PREDATOR

a fully radio controlled helicopter to give away. Bloody hell!

No, you haven't suddenly gone completely mad. That's what we said. Look at the pictures. Helicopter, right? Well, we've got one, it works, it's got everything you need to be able to petrify the neighbour's cat, divebomb their chrysanthemums and make everyone else in the neighbourhood hate you forever (as well as being a little bit jealous).

Now you'll be able to re-enact all the wonderfully atmospheric scenes at the start of the movie when Arnie and his man swoop in to the South American Jungle to do battle with anything that crosses their path. Of course you can pretend to be in any other film involving helicopters you want (*Apocalypse Now, Rambo, The Whirlybirds*) but this is a Predator competition, so you're probably better off pretending you're muscle bound and monosylabic.

And just in case you're still having trouble believing how incredible this prize is let me explain in detail what you'll get:

1ST PRIZE – *A copy of Predator from Activision, plus a Predator sticker.*
A Hiribo "Shuttle" – The basic flying gubbins that doesn't look great.
A Hughes 500 glass fibre case which makes the chopper look completely wonderful and military-like.
A 5 channel radio unit
A Starter Motor

2ND PRIZE – *Twenty five copies of the game.*

3RD PRIZE – *50 runners up stickers.*

Okay. So now we've convinced you that this is a competition well worth entering. But what do you have to do? Easy. Simply answer the questions below and send them off to "I wish I had A Radio Controlled Chopper (Fnar Fnar)" Competition, Sinclair User, 14 Holkham Road, Orton, Peterborough, P62 0UF and if you win, the helicopter will be – well, not exactly swinging its way towards you.



1) Who invented the helicopter? Was it:
(a) Adolf Hitler
(b) Mr Sikorsky
(c) Harry Westland

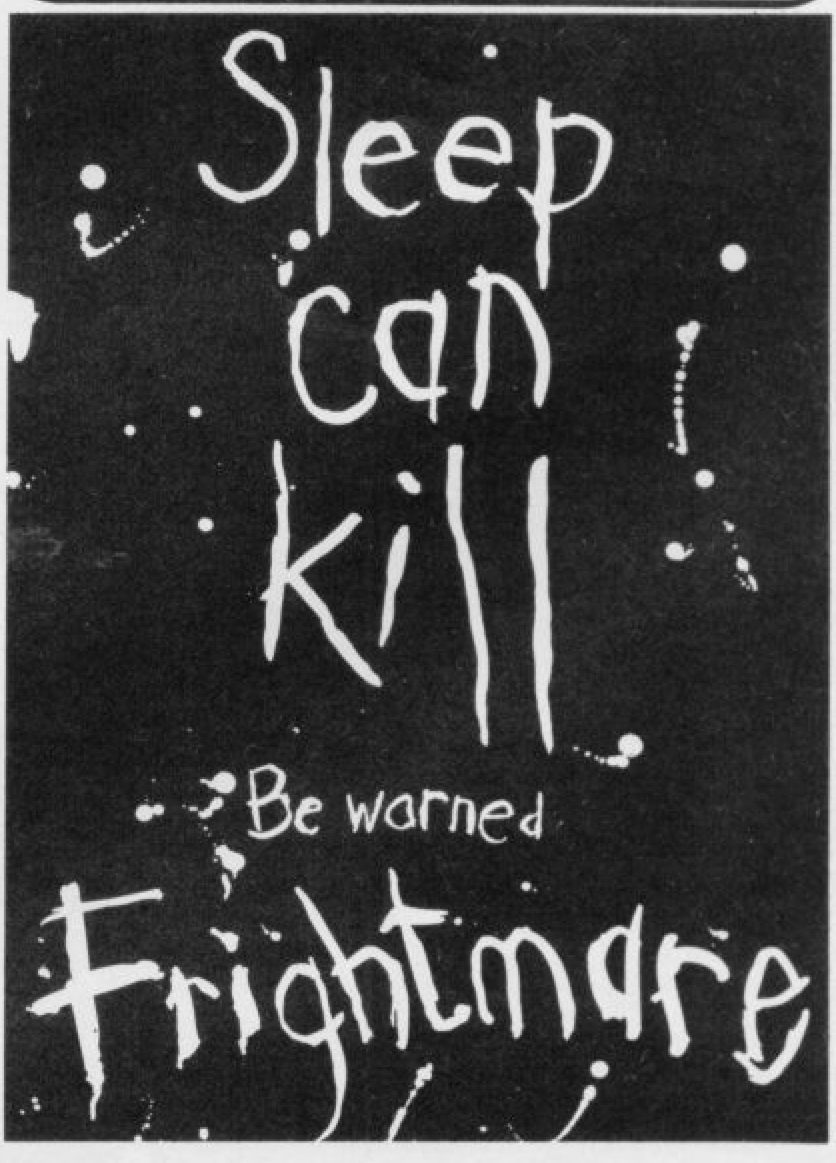
2) Name the mini-helicopter used in the Bond movie *You Only Live Twice*

3) Which of these characters has Arnold Schwarzenegger not played?
(a) Ivan Drago
(b) Conan the Barbarian
(c) Dutch Schaeffer

4) Can helicopters fly backwards?

5) Do helicopters have steering wheels?

The Answers:
1) A□ B□ C□ (tick one box)
2) ....
3) A□ B□ C□
4) ....
5) ....
Name: ....
Address ....
....



Sleep can Kill
Be warned
Frightmare

IF you reckon we're talking rubbish don't just stand there . . .

Tell us what you

Stick your comments on paper, fill in and cut out the coupon below and send it in . . .

And if you don't send us your picture – the sillier the better – we'll have to print a picture of a slug

Out Run
US Gold

I feel I must complain about your review of Out Run. I bought it in mid-December, and I feel that it's the best game available on the market at the moment.

For £8.99 you get a very smooth running game (except Gateway, which is about 4x slower than Coconut Beach) with excellent and numerous good quality screens. (Believe me, I've done them all, not wishing to boast of course).

For example, the screen after Gateway is just as fast as the arcade due to lack of scenery and slow screens are the exception rather than the rule.

With only 48K my Spectrum manages to push out easily recognisable Corvettes, VW Beetles, Porche 911s and Yorkie trucks! (Ha! Ha!).

Out Run's packaging is superb and the instructions are easy to follow. However, one small gripe: there seems to be some confusion over the maximum speed on the sheet. It claims Max. Speed 180 mph, and then Top Speed of 185 mph, both completely unrealistic.

To my mind, Our Run is well worth at lease nine stars.

Simon Turner
Loughborough
Leics
Game Choice:
Super Hang On



Coconut Capers
Gremlin Graphics

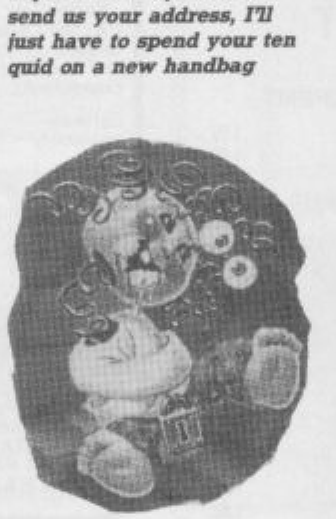
Tamara Howard! Tamara Howard! Who is this estranged person? I mean, how could anyone with a mushy pea for a brain give a fab game like Coconut Capers a measly mark of seven stars?

This game is excellent, and should have got a Classic +3, the graphics are clear and drawn excellently, the gameplay is extremely addicitive and the puzzles are good enough to keep you going back for more. And more. And more. . .

Get Tamara to make the coffee from now on please. Thank you

Aaron Saundery
Game Choice:
Bobsleigh

● *Tamara says: Actually I didn't write that review. Arthur, our man who sticks the names on the reviews, got confused and put my name on by mistake.Oh and don't you mean 'deranged' – I'm not estranged from anyone. and if you don't send us your address, I'll just have to spend your ten quid on a new handbag*



Tomb of Syrinx
Power House

I won't beat about the bush. It's about your review of Tomb of Syrinx. How in Catflap's name could you give it seven stars? It is utter ?*@! Yes, the introduction is quite nice, despite no music, but the scrolling is so appalling. I couldn't understand anything on my first go, I didn't know where I was or anything. Two errors I noticed: Firstly, if you keep moving, no monsters (!!) appear, and if you keep firing non-stop, you lose a life for no apparent reason.

Don't agree with the review at all.

David Forrest
Woodhouse
Sheffield
Game Choice:
Rampage

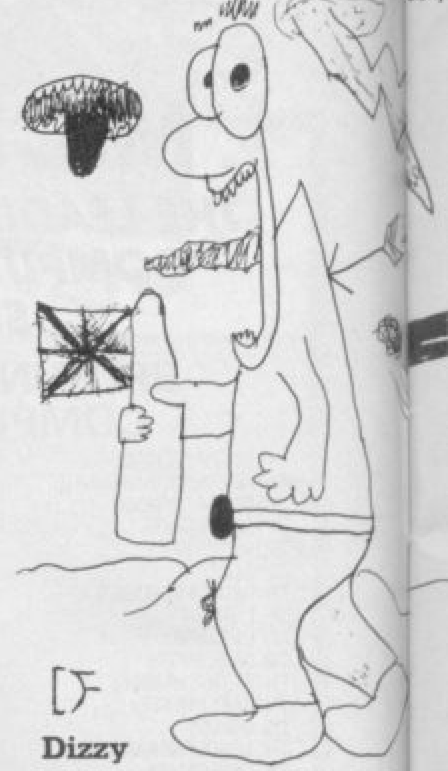
Xecutor
Ace

Congratulations on picking Xecutor as a Classic. It's just so addictive, with beautifully illustrated graphics and excellent colour, it's even better than Zynaps. I've had it for three months now, and still can't get past level three, which makes it all the more compulsive. I love it at the end of each level, when the Mother Ship comes down and you have to hit all the segments out of it, then you have to blast it a further twenty times before it blows up.

Xecutor is just so engrossing, and is an obvious must for anybody wanting a complete games collection.

Jonathan James Carter
New Moston
Manchester
Game Choice:
Super Hang On





Dizzy
Codemasters

I can't agree more with your review of Dizzy in Issue 69. The only problem is, it didn't get a Classic. It's certainly the best game I've played in a long time. The graphics are great, the tune is wonderful, and you certainly have an eggciting time!



It's the best thing I've played since I bought my Speccy 2 years ago. My advice to Spectrum games freaks is BUY IT!!!

Mark Hutton
Milton
Glasgow
Game Choice: Out Run

The Double
Johnson Scanatron

Football Manager and all the other management games pale into insignificance when compared with The Double. Starting off as Manager of a Third Division Club, your progress depends on how you deal with the players, club finances, injuries, transfers and so on. If you do well, you'll receive offers from other clubs. The decision is yours as to whether or not you accept. For example, I started with Darlington, and won promotion in my second year. The following season I moved to Everton, and took them to the First Division and the FA Cup Final.

You can send scouts out to view players to be

Every so often – well very often actually – you write to tell us that we know nothing about anything and insist that some program we trashed is actually the best game ever. Conversely you blast us for saying something is great that you absolutely loath and detest.

Enough is enough. We can't take any more, if you think you're as clever you write the damn magazine. We mean it!

Every month we'll devote a page to a selection of your opinions on the latest software. Don't get mad – write the review you think the game should have received and we (subject only to space) will print it.

Now, aside from seeing your work in print we will send you a crisp £5 – or cheque – to put towards the software title of your choice – tell us what you plan to spend the money on if your review is printed.

One special request: we want to know what you look like so send us a picture. Any old picture will do – you at home, in Ibiza, in the garden, even making silly faces in photobooths, we don't care.

So get cracking – write your reviews and send them together with the completed coupon below.

YOUR REVIEWS

Maximum 150 words. No swearing, libel or illegibility and come our of the corner fighting. Don't beat around the bush – tell us straight what you think. Send your review (of any recent game) plus your picture and fill in the coupon. *Send the lot to The Write Stuff, Sinclair User, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

Name..

Address ....

....

I'm going to put my fiver towards ....

....

*Reviews supplied without full name and address will not be considered for publication.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

SU CUTS WRITE STUFF PAYMENTS SHOCK!

It's true, from now on all Write Stuff entries will be paid only five pounds instead of ten. "Meanies" you cry. Not so, nor will we spend the money we save on holidays in exotic climes. We did it for you. (Cries of "Lies" "Cheats")

The point is we were getting so many Write Stuff entries the chance of any particular person ever getting their opinion printed was getting about one in a hundred. By cutting the cash to a (still generous) fiver we hope to separate those who have a real opinion to express from the plain greedy and give the former more of a chance to get printed. Hope you agree.

The WRITE STUFF?!

transferred, you must predict the size of your next home gate for the police. If you're wrong, heavy fines and loss of credibility result. There has never been a better Management game, and I would hope that SU gives it a Classic

Richard Watts
Great Missenden
Bucks
Game Choice: Dan Dare II

● ***Well we didn't – sorry!***

720°
US Gold

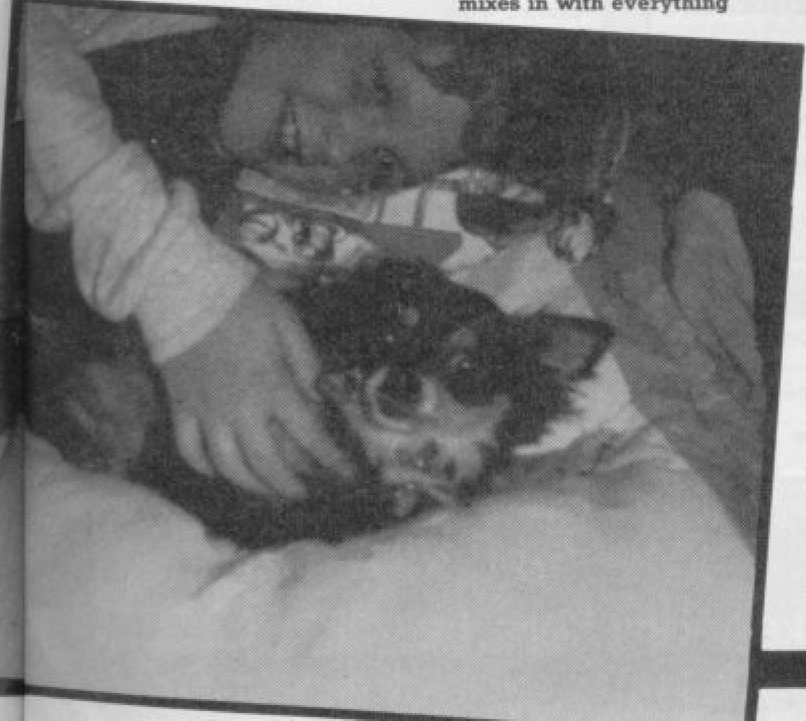
When I read the review and saw the Classic, I thought, 'There they go again, giving out Classics left, right and centre,' but when I got the game home and played it, I answered the question, 'Did we flip?' with a resounding YES!

Whether or not you like skateboards, you're gonna love this.

You control some dude with a wicked hair-do, who speeds around on a skateboard, visiting different parks and buying new boards, helmets and pads. The aim of the game is to get more tickets for the parks and to collect medals and cash prizes. The cash prizes mean you can buy more equipment which helps you perform better.

Before I played 720°, I didn't think a lot of skateboards. Now I'm definitely after one.

Gary Norris
Glossop
Derbyshire
Game Choice: Rampage



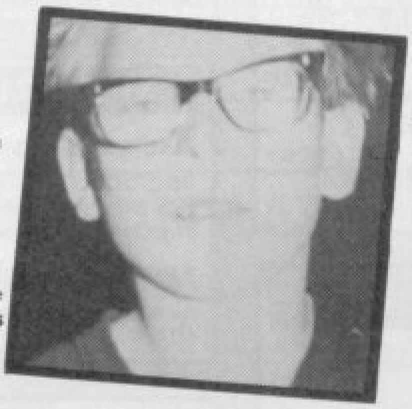
Solid Gold
US Gold

I read all of your reviews, and I usually agree with the reviewers. But this time I was horrified, yes I said horrified!

You at SU only gave Solid Gold a measly 8 stars. It's a truly amazing compilation. What an outrage, what the **** do you think you're doing, this package deserves 10 stars, no actually it deserves a Classic amongst other compilations.

Gauntlet, Ace of Aces, Leaderboard, Winter Games, Infiltrator all of them are brill. An all star package of US Gold games. It should have got ten stars – GET RID OF THE SOLID GOLD REVIEWER.

Andrew Firth
Harrogate
North Yorks
Game Choice: California Games



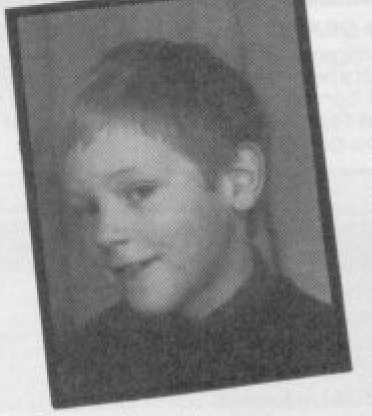
Out Run
US Gold

Overall, this game is pure rubbish!

OK, the 128K music is great but the actual game is a complete hash-up.

The graphics for the road are terrible. It is impossible to see where you're going. Everything on the screen mixes in with everything else. The multi-load is very annoying and the Hyper-Click type loader extremely temperamental. A very disappointing game. Avoid at all costs!

Richard Filby
Stowmarket
Suffolk
Game Choice: 720°



Thundercats
Elite

I am inclined to disagree with your ten stars for Thundercats. Who is this Tamara Howard anyway? Man, these girls are far too generous with their awards. Eight stars would have been more appropriate.

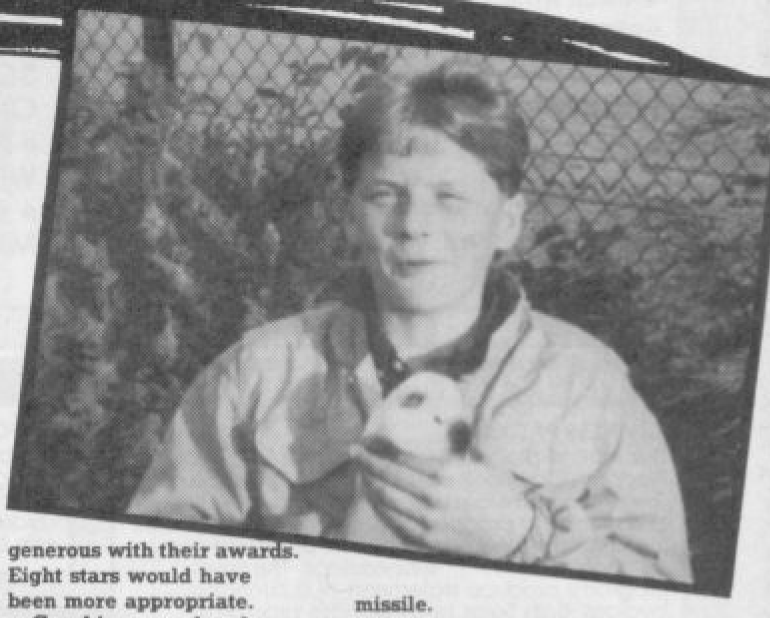
Graphics, sound and playability are excellent, but otherwise it's pretty damned hard!

Those annoying little gremlins jump into the crevices, so your only option is to tread on them, and consequently you're guaranteed to lose a couple of lives in the first round. (Great start). Tigra is irretrievable, and when you're riding that Kamikaze flying machine, you're guaranteed to bump into a missile.

However, on the whole, all things considered, a fine game. Keep it up Richard Wilcox!

Lee Jon Powis
Bournville
Birmingham
Game Choice: Out Run

● ***Tamara says: Ill just put the kettle on then shall I?***



DISCIPLE DISK INTERFACE

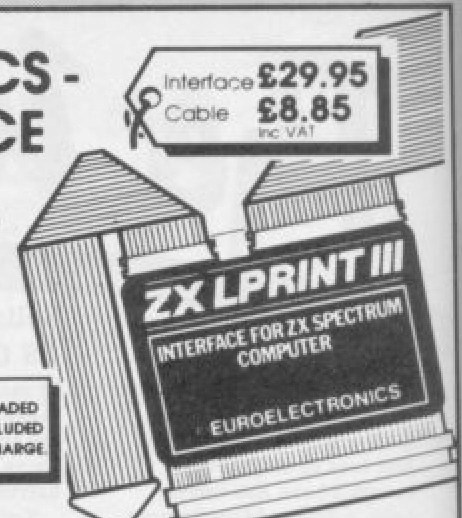
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INVOICING. £15.00p
This program will print out invoices, calculates discounts and VAT. The program will calculate totals from unit prices. Up to 50 accounts with 250 outstanding invoices.

SALES/PURCHASE LEDGER INVOICING £25.00p
This program is for use on microdrive or Opus Disc only. The program will print an invoice using a built-in price list and post the invoice to your customer's account. Will also print price list, statements, labels, etc.

WORDPROCESSING

TASWORD THREE by Tasman £16.90p
This new version of Tasword is supplied on microdrive with the following features: 128 column print out, tabs, page footers, buffered typing, page headers, full insert mode, bulit mail merge

TASPRINT by Tasman Software £9.90p
Use this program with Tasword Three to produce 5 different fonts on a dot matrix printer.

SPREAD SHEET

OMNICALC 2 by Microsphere £14.95p
Spreadsheet program with up to 5000 cells, microdrive compatible. Built in HISTOGRAMS, compatible with full-size printers.

STOCK CONTROL

STOCK CONTROL. £10.95p
Handles 900 lines, including details of supplier. Program has full search facilities enabling you to search and update all lines from one supplier.

DATABASE

MASTERFILE by Campbell Systems £14.95p
This is one of the best database programs available for the ZX Spectrum. This program has many uses in a small business.

SUPAFILE. £14.95p
This is a new database program that stores pages of text 64 columns x 22 rows. The program includes word processing and full search facilities.

V-NOTCH. £12.95p
Index and Catalogue System, for collections of photographs, recipes, books, knitting patterns, stamps, etc. Up to 3500 items per file full search facilities.

BUSINESS GRAPHICS

HISTO-GRAPH. £10.95p
This program will enable you to present figures in histograms or pie charts. Displays 3 years as a direct comparison or 5 years to show a trend. A unique feature of this program is that all the figures can be printed with the histogram.

UTILITIES

DLAN by Campbell Systems £7.95p
Use your Spectrum to sell your products. Dlan will display messages in up to 11 different typefaces. Will scroll text in any direction.

TASWIDE by Tasman Software £5.50p
You can use this program within your other programs to display 64 columns on screen.

MF-PRINT by Campbell Systems £6.95p
Enables you to set a print format for your full-size printer within masterfile. Supplied complete with masterfile for **£19.95.**

TRANSEXPRESS by Romantic Robot £9.95p
Micro-drive utility program which will enable you to back-up all your micro-drive cartridges.

TASCOPY by Tasman Software £9.90p
This program allows you to produce 3 sizes of screen copy using Interface 1.

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BOX + 10 CARTRIDGES	£22.45p
BOX + 20 CARTRIDGES	£39.95p

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SUPADRIVE

SUPADRIVE £9.95
This program supplied on microdrive allows you to format a cartridge on the spectrum with 100-105K, retrieve corrupted files or print a full catalogue showing addresses and start lines.

ACCESSORIES

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MONOCHROME MONITOR LEAD	£11.50p
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EPSON FX800	£373.91p	£429.99p
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Dlan	£10.95p
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Tascopy	£12.90p

All programs supplied 3 1/2" discs

DISCS

10 x 3 1/2" blank discs	£27.00p
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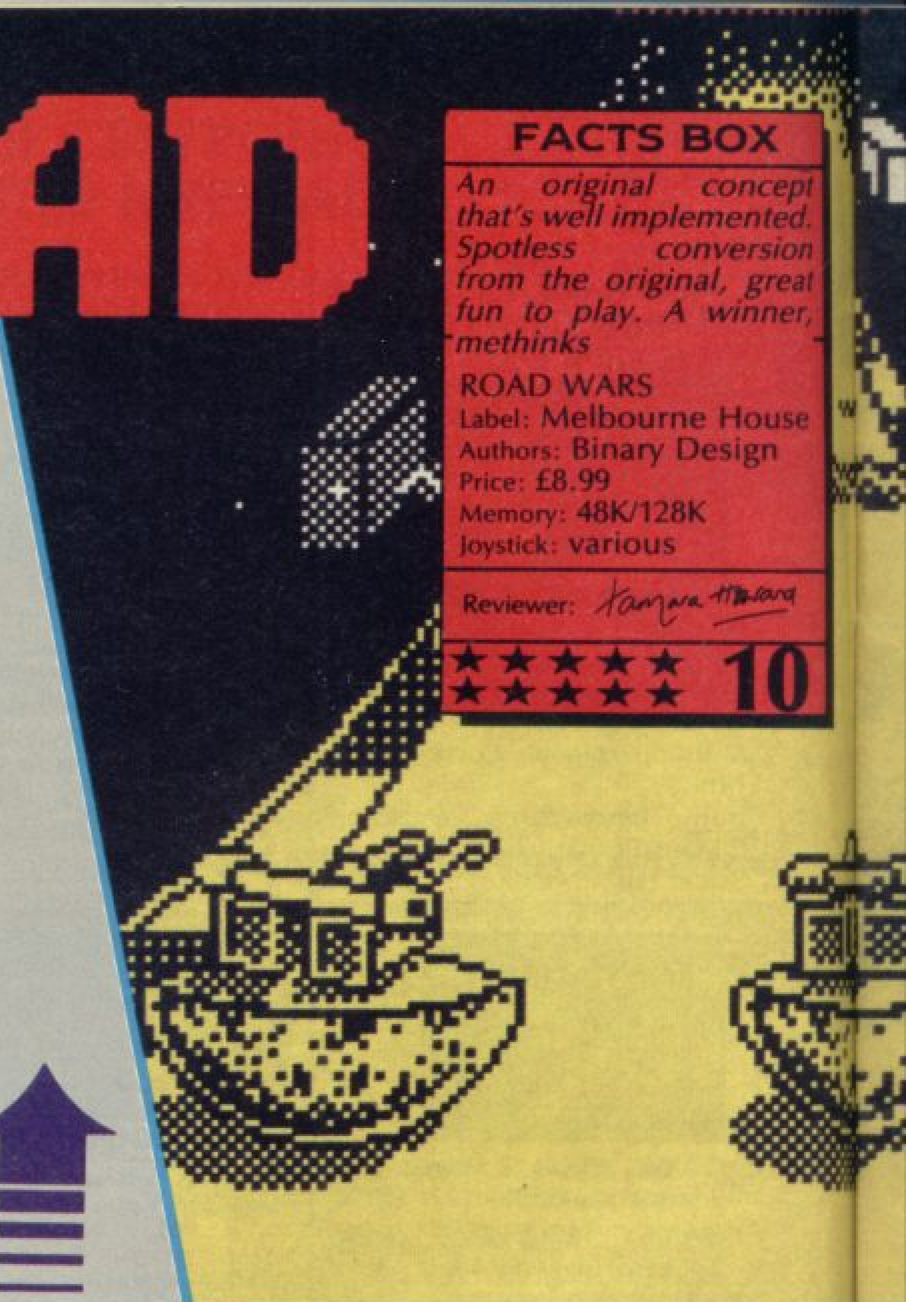
Access

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VISA



ROAD



FACTS BOX

An original concept that's well implemented. Spotless conversion from the original, great fun to play. A winner, methinks

ROAD WARS
Label: Melbourne House
Authors: Binary Design
Price: £8.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Tamara Howard

★★★★★★★★★★ 10

If you were one of the many people heard to mutter 'Coo, fab' at the sight of the Arcadia machines on the Mastertronic stand at PCW last year, then perhaps the news that **Road Wars** is to be released on the Spectrum will make you giggle a bit. "S'not possible on a Speccy, is it?" people were saying left, right and centre.

Well, fill my trousers with sand, turn me upside down and call me an egg timer, 'cos **Road Wars** is on the Spectrum is fab.

The plot is strongly garbage collection orientated – unusual in an arcade game. It has been decided that you are the ideal person to clean up the roadways that surround the moon of Armageddon. Now, since Armageddon's moon has got dozens and dozens of bits of roadway floating around the place, you'd think that whoever commissioned the roadsweeping in the first place would provide some decent equipment. Giving you what looks like a large chocolate orange and telling you to get on with it seems a tad strange.

The chocolate orange is not all it seems though and by pulling back on the joystick you can 'peel' the top off your orange, and wammo – there's a dirty great gun nestling underneath. Very useful in road clearance this since tidying the road depends on blasting away selected 'bricks' in the road barriers.

Each road is a continuous loop, you zoom on round and round until you've managed to take out all the tinted bricks on the barrier. A deceptively simple task, you may think, but in fact it's easy to roll on round and round in circles just missing one elusive brick every time.

There is another problem between you and getting your bricks, – a whole other battle ball. Another large chocolate orange rolls alongside you, trying to get in the way and stop you doing your job. If you play with a friend, then the whole thing becomes vastly more exciting, as you can play 'Push-yer-Mate-off-the-Road-into Oblivion'. This gives lots of opportunity for you to get stuck





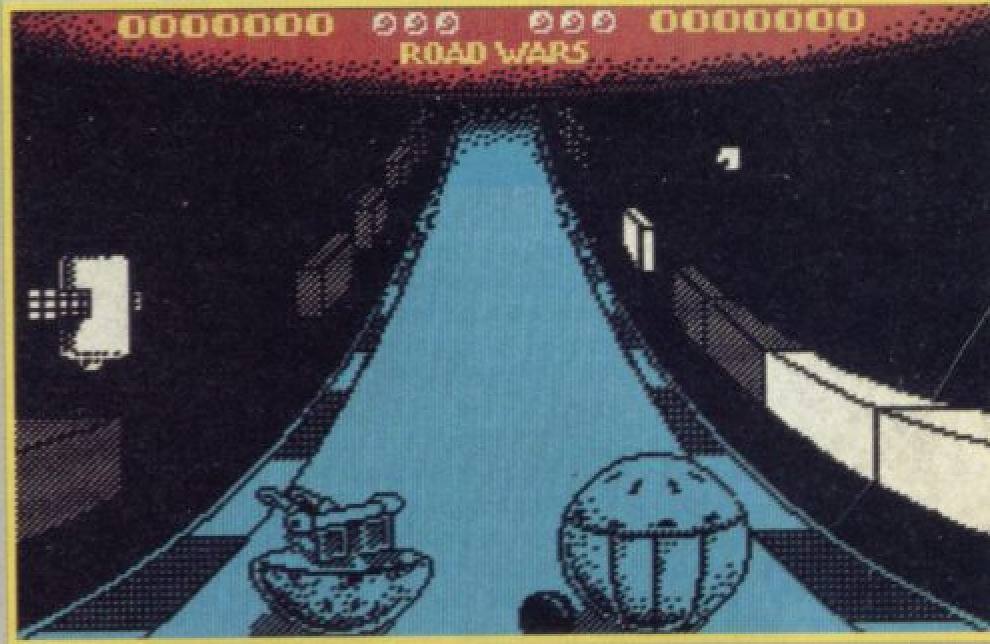
WARS

in and shove the opposing ball into spikes, walls and the bottomless void.

The sensation of travelling down and round the road itself is very well done. Smooth and effective the illusion of perspective is superb. Things appear as specks on the horizon, whizz towards you, trip you up without so much as a by your leave and whizz off again. And with the other ball getting in your way, your chances of dodging the offending object are usually pretty slim.

When you manage to shoot out all the bricks on a level you'll be shunted to the next roadway, where a whole new ballgame (if you'll pardon the pun) awaits you. On some roads there are bricks which emit sparks, you must either shoot out the bricks, or quickly pop up your protecting cover dome (joystick up) and thus roll past unscathed. You can't just stay in this defensive mode, though. Other levels feature spikes, rolling balls, people who fire at you and large walls on which to trip yourself up.

If the idea of piloting a battleball round varying roadways in space isn't an idea that tickles your senses, that's your funeral. **Road Wars** is one of those games that just grows and grows on you. It's an original idea, and it's a tribute to some brilliant programming■



ARCADE REVIEW

CAPTAIN AMERICA



FACTS BOX

Good gameplay and above-average graphics plus a licence too. Let down slightly by some lack of depth

CAPTAIN AMERICA
Label: Go!
Authors: Adventuresoft
Price: £8.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: [signature]

★★★★☆ ★★★☆☆ 7

Taking the role (and donning the ridiculous costume) of **Captain America**, it's down to you to combat evil Dr Megalomann. The Doc is aobut to wreak a terrible revenge, although it's not clear what happened to him in the first place, and North America will shortly be contaminated by a deadly virus if you don't locate and destroy the missile silo from which the bug-bearing rockets will launch.

The CIA have located the rocket base and it's your task to venture where countless Government men have been and never returned and destroy the base.

Obviously, things aren't as easy as the synopsis leads you to believe. Dr M's base in one confusing place. It's like two tubes, one inside the other, forming a number of chambers around a core. Each room has a level number and a number to indicate at which point around the tube it sits.

You're limited to only entering chambers whose radiation levels are lower than your immunity level and you



get to them using the Orbital Whatyacallit and can then step inside.

Each room has an ante-chamber guarded by two rather pathetic shooting robots which glide up and down poles, firing across the screen. Using your trusty shield as a discus, you knock them out and enter the main room through the white door on the right.

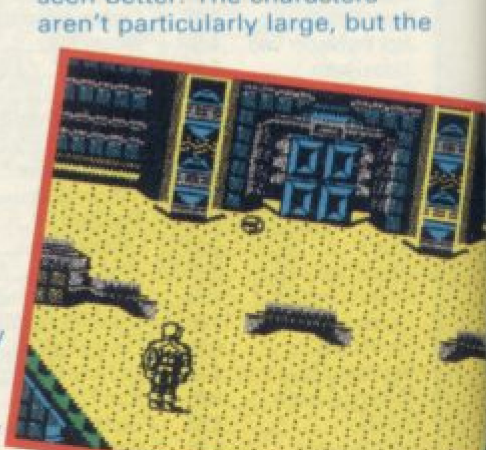
You have only a limited number of shields. If you fire them all off randomly, you'll find yourself defenceless, and shortly afterwards – dead. If you hit your target, or press *Fire* again quickly enough after you realise you're off target, the shield will return. Keeping a degree of control over your firepower adds to the strategy points and forces you to think a bit instead of just blazing away.

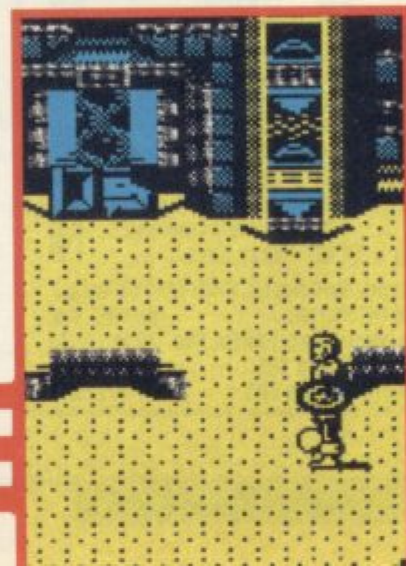
Once you're inside the main room, you'll be attacked by more of The Doc's henchmen. Using your shield once more, you can despatch the nasties and then go about getting hold of the ying-yang; a mysterious substance that provides immunity from the toxic radiation in the base, thus allowing you to explore later levels.

Once you've got past this little lot and you find yourself inside the room, swanning around having beaten the first rank of guards, you'll be assaulted by various 2nd brigade thugs who are virtually impossible to beat. But strangely enough while this became thoroughly frustrating, the point at which I thought "stuff this" was a long time coming. In short, It's a seriously addictive game.

Graphically, it's good but I've seen better. The characters aren't particularly large, but the







screens are interestingly designed. As for gameplay, there's a modicum of strategy in the room selection process, and the action is fairly gripping.

Captain America doesn't offer much that you won't have seen before, but the 'toughness' of the gameplay seems to have been pitched at the correct level to provide a challenge.

Q What do you call a man with a car on his head?

A Jack.

BACKGROUND NOISE

When we were approached to convert Outrun to the humble Spectrum we knew it would be a mammoth project and that we would be required to simulate the arcade machine, excluding hydraulics, as closely as possible.

The first things you notice when you play Outrun in the arcade are the tremendous feeling of speed, the size and detail of the graphics and the many extra features this game holds, compared to similar racing titles. Therefore, we had to optimise between the various outstanding features of the game, in order to produce an acceptable version of the original.

OUTRUN

The main problem lay in producing the large number of graphics in the game, while still allowing the computer enough processing time to generate the actual game itself.

Outrun has 15 major stages and it may be useful at this point to compare the game to similar Spectrum titles. A recent arcade classic of similar proportions, Enduro Racer, managed to simulate the speed of the original. However, it only had five stages. Within each stage of Outrun the computer actuall dedicates 16K of Ram graphics to each stage, with 29 different graphics, each with 21 frames of enlargement.

The largest of the graphics was the windmill within a later stage, which was 11 characters high by ten characters wide. In comparison, Enduro Racer had only ten different sets of graphics with an average of seven frames of enlargement. Mathmatically, the Spectrum version of Outrun had nine times more graphics in order to simulate the arcade machine than Enduro Racer had.

In order to include all the various stages, a multi-load system had to be incorporated within the code. The loader used in Outrun was programmed to be intelligent and used the memory required of the Spectrum to the fullest.

In other words, the loader knew how much memory was required for each individual stage, what memory was still free within the computer, and was able to decide whether a previous stage should be removed from the memory so that a new one would fit, therefore reducing the need to load from tape.

The 128K Spectrum, as the game progressed throughout the stages, would bank switch between the various sections of memory to allow as many stages as possible to be included into the full memory. It allowed greater variety in the graphics.

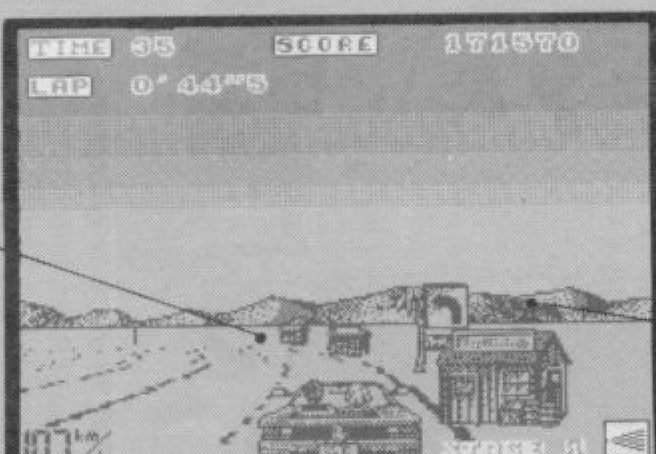
A major problem was incorporating a split in the road to allow the player to be flexible on his route throughout the game. (Unlike Enduro Racer which had fixed segments). We had to incorporate various road sizes which would eventually split into six lanes. The program was written not only to allow for various lane sizes but was flexible enough to incorporate length of straights, variation in corner widths, undulation etc, which were completely variable. Therefore it was posible to have chicanes, a feature Enduro Racer never accomplished.

The other cars within the game were also programmed efficiently and had intelligence incorporated to allow for changing lanes, complex driving patterns and greater overtaking techniques. There are five different backgrounds which all scroll horizontally, byte by byte. Therefore, once we had incorporated the main features of the game, we then had to concentrate on improving our code to allow us to adjust the handling of the Ferrari. There were nine frames, each Ferrari being a characters wide by five characters high except for the side view which was 14 characters wide by four characters high, in order to improve the game play.

The cars in Outrun are:
VW Beetle
Corvette
Convertable Mercedes
Porsche
BMW
Lorry.

The Spectrum version of Outrun simulates the arcade machine as closely as possible

Various road sizes had to be incorporated so that splits in the road could allow the player to choose his route. Length of straights, variation in corner widths and undulations were also completely variable.



Each of the fifteen stages has 16K dedicated to RAM graphics, with 29 different objects, each with 21 frames of enlargement. The largest is a windmill which is 11 characters wide by ten high.

There are five different backgrounds which scroll horizontally byte by byte. In the 128K Spectrum, bank switching is used as the game progresses to give more variety to the graphics.

The Ferrari consists of nine frames, each eight characters wide by five high, except the side view which is fourteen by four characters.

Probe



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WOW
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MULTIFACE can stop ANY program at ANY point and COPY it. It works every time, is FULLY automatic and idiot-proof. It is extremely simple to use, friendly, 100% reliable, fully error-trapped – it does absolutely everything for you.
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MULTIFACE is menu-driven with screen prompts and most operations are achieved by pressing a single key – so easy! It uses the most powerful and efficient compressing for fast re-loading and for taking minimal room when saving.
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BEAR ESSENTIALS

(WOT YOU REALLY NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE SPECTRUM)



OK, up against the wall, pay attention and relax. Maybe you've unwrapped your brand spanking new Spectrum, you've grabbed up your first copy of SU and you're totally baffled by both of them, you're not alone.

I'm going to tell you **Everything** *you really need to* **know about the Spectrum,** *and it's only going to take five minutes.*

For a start, forget all those moose-droppings about buying a computer 'cos it's educashunul. See? I can't even spell it! And if you want to learn all about machine code, input/output routines and eight-bit bus addressing, check out the technical bits. We don't want no eggheads on this page; this is for headbangers only.

Important Words

Arcade General term for the games where the emphasis is on fast reactions and good shooting rather than thought or strategy. Have unpronouncable names like **Uridium, Exolon, Gryzor, Zynaps, Xecutor. . .**

Adventure Originally, a text-only type of game in which the computer describes your location, situation, and surrounding objects, and you type in instructions for actions and movements. Melbourne House's **The Hobbit** added graphics; now most adventures have them, and you can write your own using commercially-available packages such as Gilsoft's **Professional Adventurer Writer** and Incentive's **Graphic Adventure Creator.** For some reason, most adventures are about pixies, goblins and elves, just the kind of degenerates I'd like to get my paws on. . .

Arcade-adventure Boring so far, isn't it? An arcade-adventure (or "aardvark") is an arcade game in which your task is not just to shoot everything, but to search out objects or solve puzzles too. Obvious, really. . .

Attribute Clash Uncle Sir Clive Sinclair never meant the Spectrum to be a games machine (shows how much he knew). One of the things he did was design the screen display so that only a certain number of colours could be shown in each character square. On colourful games with moving figures, clashing "colour attributes" can make sprites disappear or break up. Clever programming and graphic design is the solution, though it does tend to cut down your use of colour. Hence lots of two colour games.

Basic All computers "think" in machine language, which is effectively just strings of numbers. If you want to tell a computer what to do, it's pretty difficult to communicate in this way, so you humans use a more understandable language, often the Basic (Beginner's All-purpose Symbolic Instruction Code) found in the Spectrum. Trouble with Basic is that because the computer then has to interpret what you've written, it's slow and inefficient for writing commercial games. For that, you have to learn machine code, which is a subject which hurts my head a lot. People who understand it eat a lot of Big Macs.

Budget Usually, £1.99 or £2.99. Some software houses, like Mastertronic, Firebird and Codemasters, put out almost all of their games at these prices, but just because they're cheap, don't assume they're gonna be lousy. They MIGHT be lousy, but don't assume it, OK? "Full price" refers to games around £7.95 to £9.95. Anything over that is "bloody expensive".

THE IMPORTANT PART

Poke ***A Poke is a bit of numerical information, normally an Address Number and a Value, which you type into your computer to alter the parts of a game which count how many lives you have left, how much energy you have remaining, or suchlike. You can cheat! In SU you'll see two kinds of using pokes. The first uses interfaces such as the Romantic Robot Multiface, or the Datel Snapshot. Both of these feature reset buttons, which will freeze a game in memory after it's loaded, and display a menu allowing you to enter the Poke for infinite lives or whatever. You can then return to the altered game, and play it with added confidence.***

If you don't have this kind of interface, life is more difficult. You have to type in more complicated pokes in the form of program listings which replace the Basic header. Follow these general instructions:

- ***Switch on your Spectrum, and, in most cases, make sure that it's set to 48K mode.***
- ***Type in the listing, taking great care that what you enter exactly matches what's printed in the magazine.***
- ***Find a blank cassette and*** Save ***the listing.*** Verify ***it to make sure that it's*** Saved ***properly. Your manual tells you how to do this.***
- ***Test*** Run ***the listing. Normally it will include a "checksum" routine which can spot any mistakes you've made. If all is OK, the listing will tell you to insert the game tape, rewind it to the start and load it. Sometimes you have to start the tape AFTER the Basic header in order for the poke to work. The listing will say.***
- ***When the game starts, you will now have infinite lives, or extra energy, or whatever little bonus we've been able to think up.***
- ***Keep your cassettes of Pokes neatly labelled for when you want to use them again.***

SPECIAL TREAT

TETRIS.



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NINETEEN
Part 1 – Boot Camp
Poster No 11
SINCLAIR user
March
Remove the staples carefully and remove poster!

Coin-op (conversion) Home computer games based on popular ten-pence-piece-eating arcade machines. In the past, traditionally pretty scuzzy; now things are much better, but as the coin-ops get more and more technological, can the Spectrum keep up? I dunno, I'm just a simple bear.
Compilation A package of several games on one cassette or disc. Usually hits from the past, but sometimes an attempt to shift a load of iguana plop, so watch it before you part with your hard-earned, huh?
Disc Floppy discs are sheets of magnetic film enclosed in hard shells. They're tough, they're fast and they're efficient – just like ME, only I ain't FLOPPY. Discs store lots of programs, and you can make them do clever things, like loading a chosen program without having to wind through like you do with a tape. The Spectrum Plus 3 uses 3" discs; if it catches on, so will disc software. The catch is the price; usually around a fiver more than a cassette.
Gareth Jones, "The Mad Celt". Descended from generations of hairy-kneed warriors, Art Editor Gareth is responsible for all the pretty pictures in the magazine, and no this isn't because he can't read or write.
Graham Taylor, also known as "Sir" and "Yes, boss". The Editor of SU, author, humourist, musician, raconteur, he probably even knows how to put bathroom shelves up. A good man to keep on the right side of.
Header You know when you load a tape and it goes Wheeeee-SKREEK! Wheeeee-SKREEEEEEE...! Well the first bit is the "Basic header". It tells the computer how long the program is, where to place it in memory, useful stuff like that. Sometimes we can type in our own "Basic headers", and fool the program into giving us infinite lives, extra energy, or whatever. See **Pokes.**
Interface Any bit of hardware which connects the Spectrum to another bit of hardware. Since you're a games-playing maniac, you'll need a joystick interface; the most popular are Kempston and Sinclair types, and almost all games allow you to use either these interfaces, or keyboard controls. The Plus 2 & 3 have joystick ports built in, though. You might also want a game-poking Multiface, or a Midi interface for controlling a music synthesiser; any other kind and you're an egghead and you can get lost. Never plug in or unplug an interface with the power switched on, or you'll terminate your computer surer than if Arnie Schwarzenegger sat on it.
Jim Douglas, known as "Jim", because it's his name. SU's Staff Writer, looks just like that film star from Casablanca... no, not Lauren Bacall, Humphrey Bogart. When Jim puts on his trenchcoat, flicks his Zippo lighter and drawls "eeh-oop, ah'm off doon t'th'sweetshop" the resemblance is frightening.
Kamikaze Bear Me. I'm mean, I'm rough, I'm tough, but I'm fair. No I'm not, I'm just completely crazy, so when I talk you better lissen.
Machine code Ninety-nine percent of games are written in machine code, because it's fast and efficient. Trouble is, machine code is perfectly logical, but, unlike Basic, at first sight it just looks like a meaningless jumble of numbers and letters. People who can make sense of this are a rare and weird breed ("programmers"). If you want to learn how to write commercial programs, you'll need plenty of time, a couple of good instruction books, a machine-code assembler software package, a spare brain and lots of hot coffee...
Oo-er A handy phrase which you'll see a lot as the illiterate SU staff fail to find the right word over and over again. Can mean anything from "that-sounds-a-bit-like-something-naughty" to "some-kind-of-alien-being-which-is-impossible-to-describe-while-sober".
Outlands The bit of the magazine where we put things that aren't anything to do with Spectrums, but which you should be interested in anyway, like films, videos, hi-tech toys, comix, muzik, n'such. A hotbed of commie pinko activists if you ask me.
Riglar Jon, what writes the ZapChat column, known as "The Haircut" or "that stupid xxxx". Not only does he print all your fab tips for defeating difficult games, he and Adrian Singh's **Poke City** also publish the niftiest poke routines.
Scrolling The way in which the background of a game moves, left-to-right, or top-to-bottom, or even in all directions. Slow, jerky scrolling is a bummer; smooth scrolling, a delight.
Shoot-'em-up The universally accepted term for a game in whicn the main aim is to destroy anything which moves. Rather popular with crazy, heavily-armed bears.
Simulation A game which attempts to recreate in detail a real life situation, such as piloting a plane, navigating a submarine, opening a tin of beans... **Attack of the Mutant Gerbil People,** you can be sure, is Not a simulation.
Smart bomb Originally found in the coin-op classic **Defender** – a popular game feature which allows you to destroy all the enemies on your screen by triggering a special weapon. You usually run out of them just when you need them most, just like lemon sherbets.
Spectrum You got one, or you wouldn't be reading this, right? The Spectrum's now getting on, for a computer; first there was the 16K with squishy rubber keys, then the 48K, then the Plus with a new case and better keyboard, then the 128K, then the Plus 2 with a built-in tape deck and joystick ports, and now the Plus 3 with built-in disc drive. They all run the same software, but the 128, Plus 2 and Plus 3 can also run bigger programs using better sound effects – not that there are to many of these 128K programs to be had.
SU. It stands for Sinclair User, dummies, though if the Mad Celt gets any more carried away with the cover designs, one day he'll forget to leave space for the title logo. SU is the bestest, the deffest, the meanest, the most all-round jolly good monthly for Spectrum owners. In fact I didn't know there were any others, until I found some unsold 1985 issues of **Splosh!** and **Whose Sinclair?** in a disused newsagents in Solihull.
Sugar what you put in your tea. Also, Lord Sir Baron Alan Sugar, boss of Amstrad and current producer of the Sinclair Spectrum. Started off selling aerials from a car boot, and now owns most of the world. A lesson to us all, but what type of lesson is difficult to say.
Tamara Howard SU's Staff Writer, may be a girl but is definitely not a girlie. Skilled with typewriter and joystick, she works hard, plays hard and drinks hard... whoops, strike that. Known as "Tambo", usually behind her back.
Wah? What naff games players say when they die unexpectedly in an arcade game. ■

To make life easier this month we've a special treat we're giving away cover-mounted cassettes of pre-recorded games pokes in future issues. Now you don't even have to do the typing; just load the Poke for the game you want to play, then follow the on-screen instructions. Easy, huh?

```
   1 REM MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE
   2 REM poke (c) A.SINGH '88
   3 REM
  10 PRINT AT 10,0;"START 'MASTE
RS OF UNIVERSE' TAPE"
  20 LOAD ""CODE
  30 FOR f=61457 TO 61466
  40 READ a: POKE f,a
  50 NEXT f
  60 RANDOMIZE USR 61440
  70 DATA 175,50,189,164,50
  80 DATA 206,200,195,0,161
```

▲ A typical poke Line 20 loads the game after Line 10 tells you to play the tape. Lines 30-50 read all the sneaky cheaty numbers stored in the DATA, and stick it in the appropriate place. Finally, Line 60 goes to the start location of the game, and you're off!

PERIPHE
the Shape o

WORLD EXCLUSIVE!

Dr Clement Sprockett of Loontech PLC explains their forthcoming Spectrum Products...

"SOME OF YOU MAY HAVE BEEN WONDERING just what purpose is served by the numerous slots, holes und gaps in the case of your Spectrum. They allow you to connect the computer to add-ons. Here are just a few of the ideas our so-brilliant-it's-scarey scientists have been developing...

Jolly Roger Interface

Yo-ho-ho, me hearties! At last the interface which will allow you to produce back-up copies without the risk of piracy. The Jolly Roger will transfer any progam to cassette, microdrive, disc, even to punched tape – but, if you attempt to give a copy away, it electrocutes you.

The Jolly Roger also has the machine-code toolkit. With this you can automatically obtain infinite lives, unlimited energy, Samantha Fox's phone number and a degree in sociology from the Open University.

The Lazy Tag Auto-Blaster



Too tired to strap on the Laser Tag gear, charge up the pistol and shoot it out with your friends? Let the Lazy Tag unit do all the hard work for you. Consists of a portable power supply, motorised trolley, light-sensor and heat-seeking self-targeting infra-red pistol. You and your friends connect up the Spectrums, sit back and watch them chasing each other around the house shooting wildly.

Actually quite Clever Printer Interface

Not only does this peripheral connect the Spectrum to any printer known to Man, it also writes your letters for you. With just a few key words, such as "Bank manager – usual thing" you can instruct the AQCPI to write "Dear Mr de Sade, thank you for your kind reminder that my account is £500 overdrawn, I am expecting a postal order from my grandmother soon and hope you will not be calling the police in the meantime." The AQCPI also does thank-you letters, job applications, "goodbye forever" letters in two flavours (nice und nasty), and Jeffery Archer novels (requires special vocabulary down-grade kit).



Teetho 5000

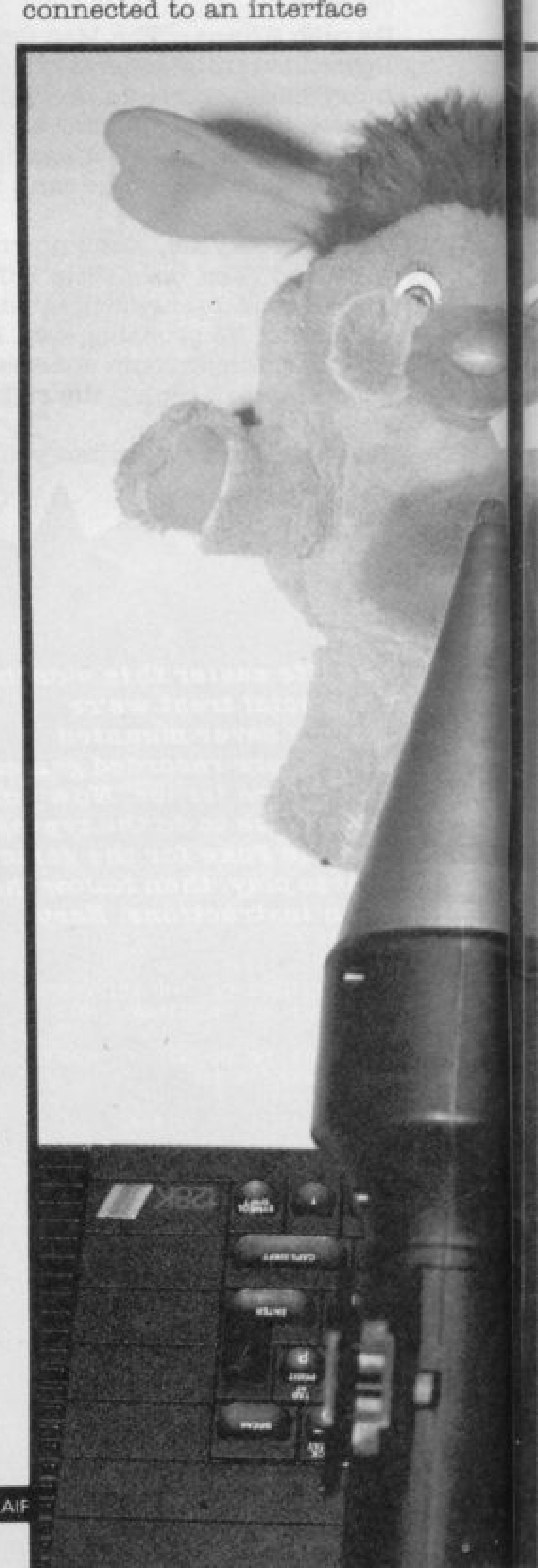
Put an end to bathroom misery with the Teetho 5000. Includes robot arm, brush, toothpaste dispenser, flossing attachment and toothpick. Put the Teetho into program mode and use the brush attachment to clean the teeth as usual. Each time you walk into the bathroom, simply select the required service from the menu; "quick brush", "thorough scrub" or "cor blimey my mouth tastes as if a monkey has slept in it," and open the mouth wide for instant teeth-cleaning action. Do not walk into the bath room backwards under any circumstances.

Star Wars Interface

No, not the game – the Strategic Defence Initiative. For too long computer owners have been ignored as a major world power, in favour of nonentities like Russia and America. Now it is time to turn the tables. The Star Wars Interface gives your Spectrum radio control of a network of synchronously-orbiting satellite laser weapons, which have the capability to detect and intercept intercontinental ballistic missiles. Star Wars Interface cost £29.95; satellites are $5.6 billion per unit.

Fluffy Toy Dispenser

Is your life made miserable by continually falling over the fluffy toys belonging to your little sister? Are the Care Bears filling you with nausea? Is the fluffy Snoopy making you want to take up taxidermy? The Fluffy Toy Dispenser dispenses with them all – for good! This simple device is a straightforward thermo-nuclear accelerator, connected to an interface



ERAL VISION
of things to come

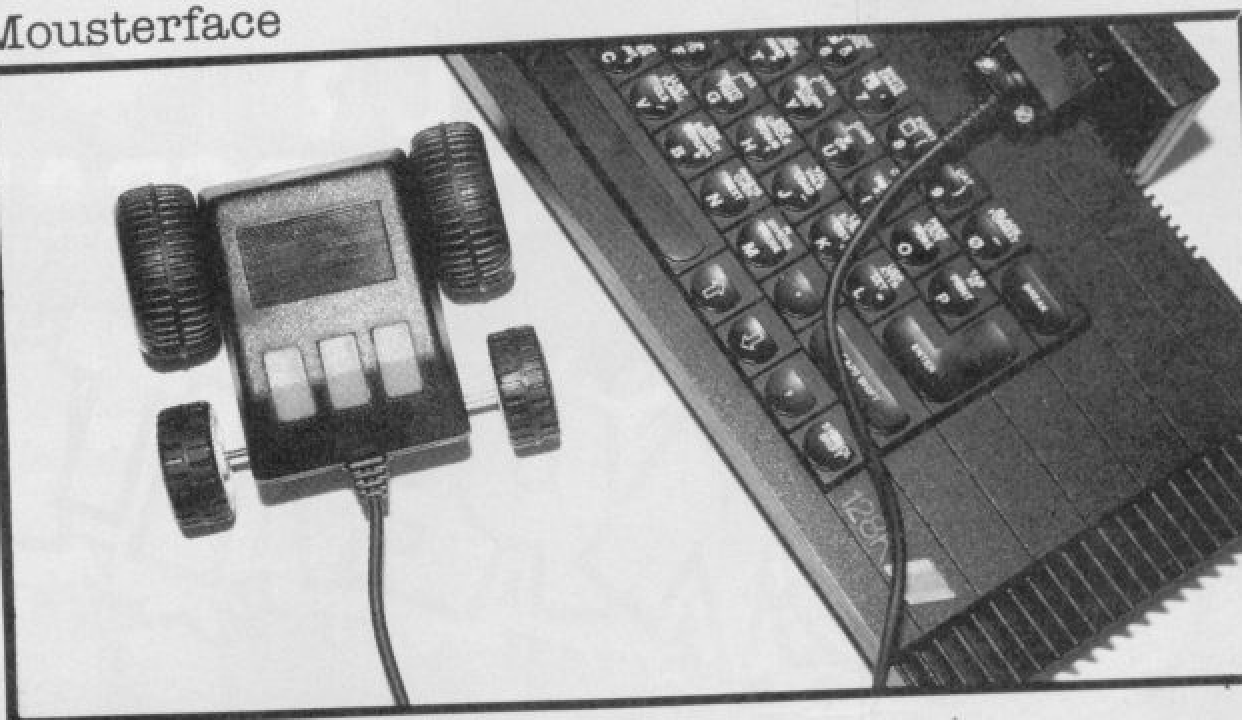
on the Spectrum which detects particles of acrylic fibre in the atmosphere. The cannon locks onto the target, and, when the fluffy object within range, it is immediately vapourised. Special attachments deal with especially cute fluffies. For My Little Ponies, the fragmentation grenades are recommended; for Cabbage Patch Kids, the flamethrower. We are working on a Barbie Doll detector, but experiments with teddy bears were disrupted by a massive explosion in the laboratory.



The Reaguntroller

This connects the Spectrum to any American President, and can dramatically enhance his memory capacity, processing speed and powers of recall.

Mousterface



What's the point of having a mouse-operated system when you still have to move the mouse around yourself? Our Mousterface provides the little devil with four tiny wheels. Now you just type in the instructions and before you can say "but hang on a minute..." the mouse is running around.



AutoRoss

If you can't get enough of happy-go-lucky Jonathan Ross on TV, apart from psychiatric treatment this is just the thing for you! A life-size dummy of John connected by ribbon cable to the Spectrum's user port. Comes with interchangeable vocabulary programs ("Hello there!"), all the familiar irritating mannerisms and built-in camera-hogging algorithms. Also available; AutoBenElton and AutoCilla.

Skateboardiser

A brilliant idea for the hi-tech skateboarder. Connects the Spectrum by radio transmissions to a servo-motor attached to the front axle of the skateboard. Simply type in directions for speed, direction and required stunts, press RUN and away you go – sometimes so far away that you are never heard of again! Dr Jefferies, please send us a postcard, wherever you are)

The Nosex State Of The Art Smell Sampler

The sound sampler is old hat! What is so clever about digitising a sound, huh? The Nosex is the product of a dedicated team of odour technologists, who have perfected a method of storing any pong you care to mention in digital form. The Nosex takes the form of a giant hooter; simply plug it into the joystick port and introduce the required whiff under the nostrils. The sampled odours can then be edited, looped, reversed, joined together, transposed, and played from a MIDI keyboard. Popular smells will be made available on cassette, and soon you will all be saying "Phwooor! Was that you or is it a Spectrum?"

The Brainstick from Brain Corp

No matter how tough the constuction, or how hardwearing the switches, your joystick is bound to let you down in the end. This is not good enough! The at Loontech now have the solution – the Brainstick. Five antennae are inserted into the skull in a delicate operation, which can be performed at all branches of Boots the chemists. The Brainstick receiver then "hears" your commands as you think UP! DOWN! LEFT! RIGHT! FIRE! Just think how impressed your friends will be as your score rockets, without you even touching the controls! Soon we hope to have ironed the bugs out of the prototype, which switches televisions on, defrosts refrigerators and makes cats explode. Also, the Brainstick will not function for Sun readers; for obvious reasons.

Please note: Production of the items above has unfortunately been halted owing to financial difficulties at Loontech and the Government's intervention during the final – oh, alright, we made it all up.



PILOT YOUR OWN HOVERCRAFT

COMPETITION



They know how to enjoy themselves, the Yanks, don't they? Well, the Electronic Arts boys certainly do. Many a wacky tale has been told of their Friday afternoon "meetings". All Budweiser and baseball caps, I'll be bound.

Anyway, we thought that what with Electronic Arts on the verge (ooer) of releasing their first Spectrum title, PHM Pegasus *(reviewed elsewhere this month) it was time to give you a taste of what those zany crazy round-vowelled guys do in their spare time.*

Well, it's obvious, isn't it? They need something to get rid of all those "Woa! Yep! Yo! Awwwlriiiite! Hey!" sounds they store up during the week. They also need something a bit wild and woolly and exciting.

Yes. You've got it. There's nothing more these fun-loving Stateside jokers like more than a blast in a hovercraft.

The winner of our moderately incredible competition will get to go to Brands Hatch (yes, the big racetrack) with an Electronic Arts person and a Sinclair User Person – you don't think we'd pass up a chance of a day out, do you? They'll be briefed in the gubbins and mechanics of how hovercraft work, and they'll be flown around by the instructor, and then comes the good bit – you can fly the hovercraft around the circuit at breakneck speed. Finally, you'll be awarded a certificate detailing how you flew the craft and how many people you ran over etc.

There'll be twenty-five runners-up prizes of copies of the game and posters.

All you have to do is answer the questions below and send the coupon off to "A lot more fun than a hoover dustette" Competition, Sinclair User, 14 Holkham Road, Orton, Peterborough PE2 0UF.



The Questions:

1) Who invented the Hovercraft? Was it: (a) Mr Hoover (b) Mr Cockerell (c) God

2) Hovercraft have little wheels underneath them. True or false?

3) What is the flappy bit where all the air collects on a hovercraft called? Is it: (a) The Skirt (b) The Dress (c) The Convection Mechanics (d) David

The Coupon:

1)

2)

3)

Name:..

Address:..

....



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PRESENTS
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Commodore
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COMMODORE Cassette; Disk. ATARI ST: AMIGA £19.95.
AMSTRAD CPC Disk

SHACKLED



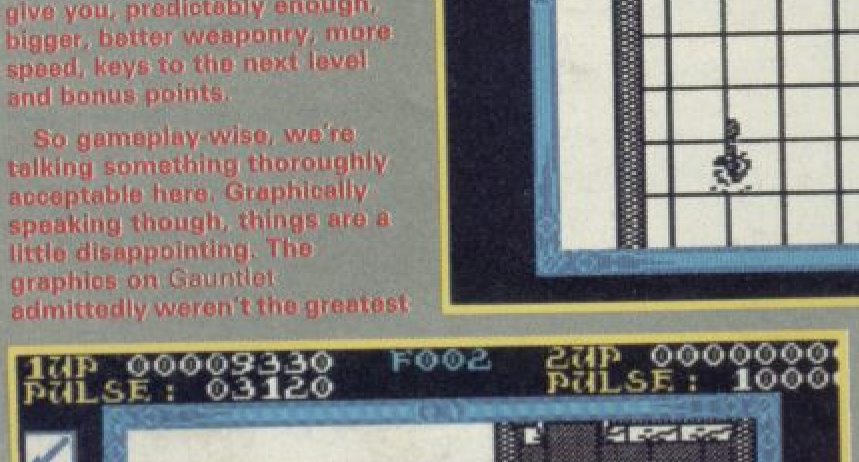
There are certain things that can be found in a computer game that are liable to make even this jaded SU reviewer sit up and take notice. What if it's a coin-op licence? Yes, I like a nice bash in the arcades, me. Supposing it were to be more than slightly reminiscent of Gauntlet? Yup, I go for Gauntlet same as everyone else. How about if the hero of this coin-op licensed, Gauntlet-esque game were to be tall, muscular, well-oiled and fur clad? Phoar, nor'alf!!

Suffice to say then, that seeing as Shackled from US Gold manages to satisfy these three criteria in varying degrees, it's something of a success.

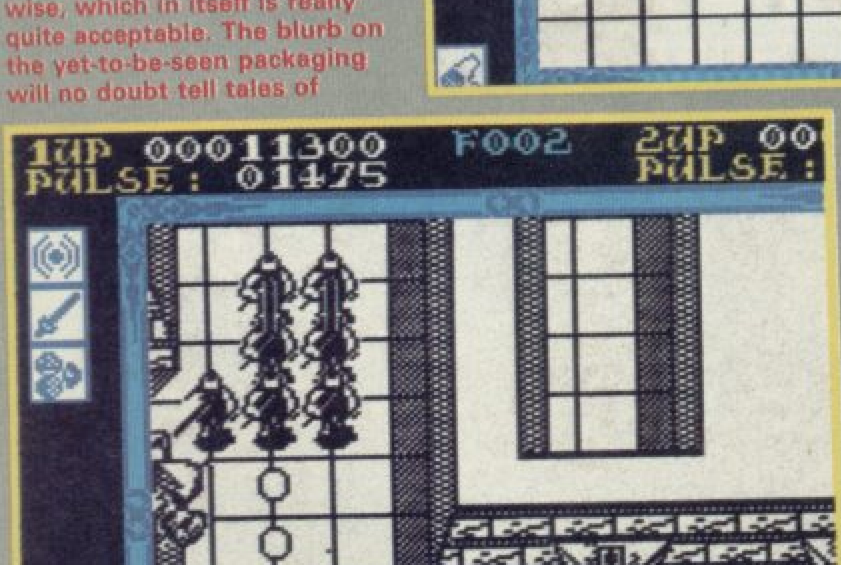
Shackled, for those of you who don't have the benefit of the simply enormous instruction booklet, is a Data East coin-op that promises to keep you 'shackled to the upright'. In layman's terms, I guess that all this means is that you're going to have to keep forcing little ten pences into it. Still, I digress, let's get on with the reveiw.

Shackled is remarkably similar to Gauntlet gameplay-wise, which in itself is really quite acceptable. The blurb on the yet-to-be-seen packaging will no doubt tell tales of bearded warriors and long quests for truth, but the simple explanation is that the game revolves around rescuing prisoners from a large, multi-levelled dungeon crawling with armed guards and strange bonus symbols. Such symbols give you, predictably enough, bigger, better weaponry, more speed, keys to the next level and bonus points.

So gameplay-wise, we're talking something thoroughly acceptable here. Graphically speaking though, things are a little disappointing. The graphics on Gauntlet admittedly weren't the greatest thing since sliced pumpernickel, but they were at least varied and colourful. Shackled is completely kitted out in tasteful monochrome. Don't be surprised if you find youself slightly confused by exactly what your character is meant to be either. If you think you're playing the part of a badly drawn cartoon robin, no you're not going mad, but adjust your lateral vision slightly, and the chirpy little bird will take on the form of a hunky hero carrying a shield in front of him. A small point, but one worth mentioning if only to quell the number of telephone calls to the SU office that







HINT AND TIPS

- Rule Number One – If it moves, shoot it.
- Remember to keep a look out for friends and to rescue them, they're worth valuable bonus points.
- Don't stay too long on a level, a green blob will appear and drain away your energy.
- Keep your eyes peeled for bonus doors through to bonus levels one quick way to bump up your score.
- Giant enemies should always be shot if you can manage it, they'll drop keys which are worth lots of bonus points.
- Never pick up a scroll if a baddie drops one. They won't do you any harm, but they'll kill off your friends and no questions asked.

ARCADE ★ REVIEW

FACTS BOX

A fun-packed conversion that will keep all Gauntlet fans well entertained. Shame about the graphics though.

SHACKLED

Label: US Gold
Author: Choice
Price: £8.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Tamara Howard

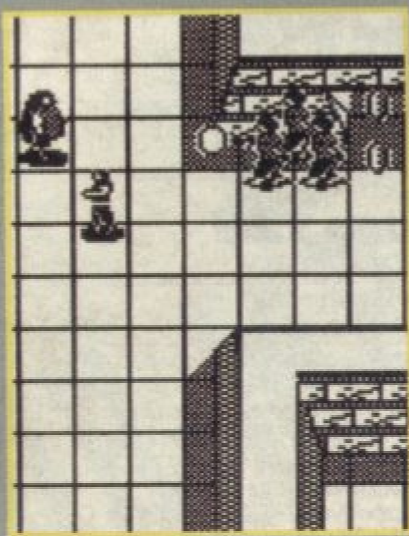
★★★★☆ ★★★★☆ 8

begin, 'Here, you know that Shackled game? Well....'

Still, important points to note are that graphics are, if slightly ornithological, large and sprightly, and the levels are big, butch and complex. Finding the exits to each level is no easy task, there's quite often a lot of running up and down interminable corridors with large numbers of hammer throwing warriors up yer barkside. Once through the exit (and beware, you're really going to have to throw yourself at the door to get through) you'll be rewarded by a nice flashing screen, and the legend 'Free of the shackles at last.' Sounds like the by-line for a haermorrhoids preparation to me, but there's no accounting for taste.

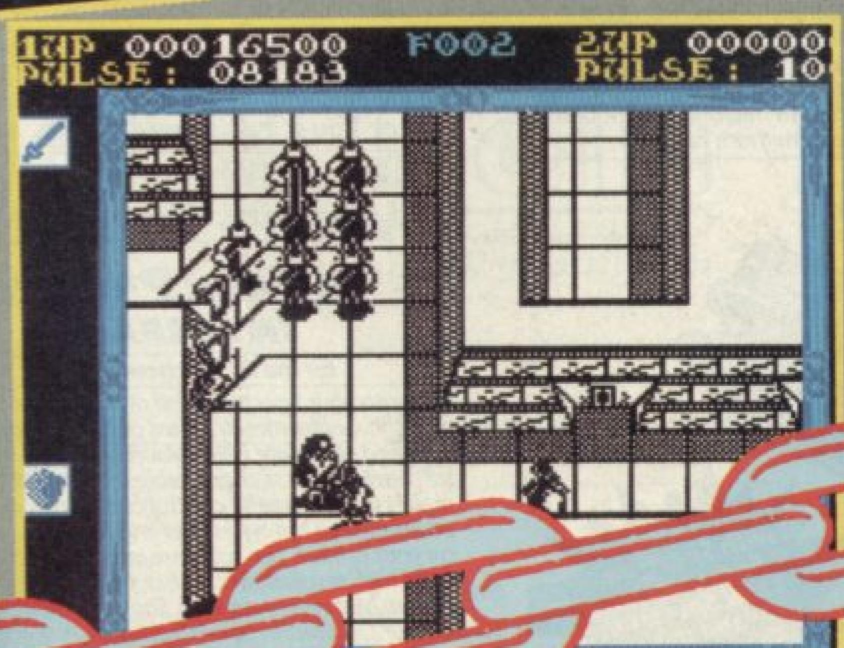
The important thing here, and this is a lesson for us all, is that although the pictures are not exactly the sort of thing that you'd hang on your wall, the gameplay is marvellous fun and should keep you at it for hours.■





PROGRAMMERS

Those responsible for the mighty **Shackled** conversion are a group of people known collectively as **Choice,** not, as one member of the SU team thought, a dogfood, but a team of programmers. Amongst their previous success are **World Games** and **Kung Fu Master.**



TWILIGHT ZONE

TANK BUSTERS

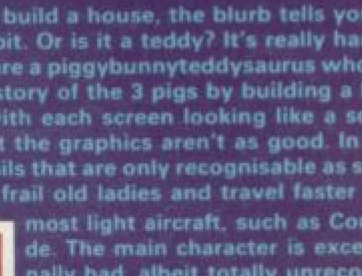
ARCADE Label: **Firebird** Price: **£1.99** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **various** Reviewer: **Sewli Mannan**

If you are a patient person then this is the game for you otherwise don't bother

You're a hero again defending a remote asteroid from enemies curiously like those in Battlezone. All you have is a tank, cruddy cannons and the odd anti-tank missile. Sound more like Battlezone eh? It's almost like a game of hide and seek. The enemy hides and you seek. Boy, do those tanks know how to hide? Yes they do. So why bother? Just stay where you are, let them come and find you. It's much quicker.

The graphics are OK – the whole screen is blue and the tanks and other weird square scenery are white. The game, though, is not very exciting. It manages to be both dead-easy and frustrating! You see nothing and from nowhere something gets you from behind then the program has the cheek to say *"You have been zapped"*. I wouldn't have been zapped if it didn't cheat!

There's nothing here, except for those with a deep interest in looking for things. And for those with patience. Save the money■



★★★☆☆ ★★☆☆☆ 5

PIGGY

Label: **Bug Byte** Price: **£1.99** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **Kempston** Reviewer: **Tony "Piggy" Dillon**

How someone could even hope to get away with this trash is beyond me. It's terrible

Piggy needs help in his bid to build a house, the blurb tells you, so naturally he turns into a rabbit. Or is it a teddy? It's really hard to tell. Yes in this attrocity you are a piggybunnyteddysaurus who has to complete the third part of the story of the 3 pigs by building a brick house. The game is flip screen, with each screen looking like a scaled down version of Feud, except that the graphics aren't as good. In fact, the graphics aren't good at all. Snails that are only recognisable as snails because they are twice as big as frail old ladies and travel faster than most light aircraft, such as Concorde. The main character is exceptionally bad, albeit totally unrecognisable. The animation is flickery and the controls are slow and unresponsive.

Need I say more?■



★☆☆☆☆ ☆☆☆☆☆ 1

ALIEN 8

ARCADE Label: **Mastertronic** Author: **Ultimate** Price: **£1.99** Memory: **48K/128K** Reviewer: **Tony Dillon**

Ricochet is really on a roll this month, with yet another release of a classic oldie

As I sit here, I'm suffering from shock of a certain West end musical I have just visited which cost me an awful lot of money and I left during the interval because it was so bad. I won't mention which one it was, but only Time will heal the hole in my pocket. So I need the cash so it's back to the typewriter. This, another re-release from Richochet is an Ultimate oldie-classic. You play a cutesy little robot, who has to collect a bunch of crystals and save the space ship.

The game is presented in the (then) standard filmation 3D system with the twist that some problems in one room need an item from another room to complete them. Nice thought. All of the graphics are well designed and animation is crisp. Playability is high and the game itself is a worthy addition to any budget collector, or anybody who hasn't got it already.■



★★★★☆ ★★★☆☆ 7

TASWORD

THE WORD PROCESSOR FOR THE ZX SPECTRUM 48K, 128, +2 AND +3

Power, flexibility and ease of use. Qualities that have given **TASWORD** a reputation for performance and unbeatable value for money. From a simple letter to a best selling novel, whatever your needs. **TASWORD** can meet your requirements. Simply and efficiently. **TASWORD** offers an indispensable range of useful features yet at the same time is remarkably easy to use. With detailed on-screen help displays, comprehensive print options, on-screen formatting and even a built-in mail merge. **TASWORD** is a complete word processor for the ZX Spectrum.

TASWORD is available for every Spectrum computer, each version specially developed to make maximum use of memory and keyboard layout. Control keys have been logically planned to ensure the user makes the most effective use of **TASWORD'S** powerful features. Combining a host of useful commands with uncomplicated procedures. **TASWORD** has the power and versatility required for effective word processing.

TASWORD. Power, flexibility and performance. The definitive word processor for the ZX Spectrum.



NEW!

TASWORD PLUS THREE
THE WORD PROCESSOR

for the ZX Spectrum +3
disc £19.95

A sophisticated version of TASWORD designed to take full advantage of the super fast ZX Spectrum +3 disc drives. Supplied on 3 inch disc, TASWORD PLUS THREE features an indispensable range of powerful editing commands which are complemented by on-screen help displays, disc management commands and comprehensive printing options. Power and ease of use combined into one program.

TASWORD TWO
THE WORD PROCESSOR

for the ZX 48K Spectrum
cassette £13.90 microdrive cartridge £15.40

The highly successful word processor for the ZX 48K Spectrum. TASWORD TWO does not incorporate mail merge but with 64 characters per line and packed with a host of useful features, TASWORD TWO is the ideal cassette based word processing package for the ZX 48K Spectrum.

TASWORD THREE
THE WORD PROCESSOR

for the ZX 48K Spectrum
microdrive cartridge £16.50

TASWORD THREE set a new standard for word processing on the ZX Spectrum. Featuring enhanced program and cursor speed, up to 128 characters per line, advanced text editing commands and a powerful mail merge facility. TASWORD THREE is the definitive word processor for the ZX 48K Spectrum and ZX 48K Spectrum+ with microdrive.

TASWORD 128
THE WORD PROCESSOR

for the ZX Spectrum 128
cassette £13.90

TASWORD 128 has been specifically developed to take full advantage of the memory offered by the Spectrum 128. A massive 60,000 characters can be held in memory at any one time, enough room for over 10,000 words! Incorporating a range of powerful commands and a mail merge facility (when transferred to microdrive). TASWORD 128 takes full advantage of the ZX Spectrum 128. TASWORD 128 is supplied on, and will run on, cassette and can easily be transferred to microdrive following instructions supplied with the program.

TASWORD PLUS TWO
THE WORD PROCESSOR

for the ZX Spectrum +2
cassette £13.90

Designed to cater for the ZX Spectrum +2 keyboard layout and legends, TASWORD PLUS TWO is packed with useful features — 64K text files, help displays, on-screen formatting and a sophisticated set of print options TASWORD PLUS TWO is readily transferred to microdrive although mail merge can even be done from cassette.



Compatible with Spectrum, Spectrum +, 128K Spectrum and the Spectrum +2

TASPRINT PLUS THREE
THE STYLE WRITER

for the ZX Spectrum +3
disc £19.95

Print output from Tasword Plus Three in a choice of twenty five distinctive typestyles. Tasprint utilises the graphics capabilities of dot matrix printers to form, with a double pass of the print head, output in a range of twenty five unique fonts varying from the gothic typeface of Cloister to the hand writing simulation of Palace Script. Tasprint Plus Three also includes a font designer which allows you to modify the existing fonts or create your own unique lettering styles.

TASPRINT
THE STYLE WRITER

TASPRINT for the ZX 48K Spectrum
cassette £9.90 microdrive cartridge £11.40

A must for dot matrix printer owners! Print your program output and listings in a choice of five impressive print styles. TASPRINT utilises the graphics capabilities of dot matrix printers to form, with a double pass of the printhead, output in a range of five fonts varying from the futuristic Data-Run to the hand writing simulation of Palace Script. A TASPRINT gives your output originality and style! The TASPRINT fonts are shown below together with a list of compatible printers to the right.

COMPACTA -
bold and heavy, good for emphasis

DATA-RUN -
A FUTURISTIC SCRIPT

LECTURA LIGHT -
clean and pleasing to read

MEDIAN -
a serious business-like script

PALACE SCRIPT -
a distinctive flowing font

TASMAN PRINTER INTERFACE

for the ZX Spectrum £29.90

Plug into your Spectrum and drive any printer fitted with the Centronics standard parallel interface. Supplied complete with ribbon cable and driving software. The user changeable interface software makes it easy to send control codes to take full advantage of the typestyles and features available on your printer. The software includes fast machine code high resolution screen copy software for Epson, Mannesmann Tally, Shinwa, Star and Tandy Colour Graphic (in colour!) printers. A special version of TASCOPY (shaded screen copy software) for this interface is INCLUDED in this package.

TAS-SIGN

NEW!

THE SIGN MAKER FOR THE ZX SPECTRUM 128, +2 AND +3

Produce and print your own signs, posters, banners and large notices to get your message across with maximum impact.

• Four distinctive lettering styles • Characters at any height from one inch to the full width of the paper • Italic printing • Underlining • Constant or proportional letter spacing • Automatic kerning • Line centering • Eight shading patterns • Print either across the paper in the usual direction, or along the length of the paper to produce large eye-catching banners and notices • Print a border around the sign, in one of the optional shading patterns if required • A range of options to select print quality

NEW!



The illustrations on this page are reduced from full-size TAS-SIGN output.

TAS-SIGN and TASPRINT drive nearly all dot-matrix printers including those made by:

Admate	Datech	Seikosha
Amstrad	Epson	Shinwa
Astech	Kaga-Taxan	Smith Corona
Brother	Mannesmann Tally	Sord
C. Itoh	NEC	Star
Canon	Newbury	
Citizen	Panasonic	

TAS-SIGN

ZX SPECTRUM +3 disc	**£19.95**
ZX SPECTRUM 128/+2 cassette	**£17.95**

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RS232 cable for ZX Interface 1	**£14.50**
RS232 cable for Spectrum 128, +2 and +3 serial port	**£14.50**
Parallel Printer cable for +3	**£9.95**

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TASWORD PLUS TWO ZX Spectrum +2	**£19.50**
TASPRINT ZX Spectrum	**£12.90**
TASCOPY for use with Opus parallel port	**£12.90**

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TWILIGHT

TAS SIGN

WORKOUT Label: **Tasman** Price: **£17.95 tape, £19.95 disc** Memory: **128K** Joystick: **none** Reviewer: **Tony Dillon**

A slightly odd idea methinks which will probably only serve a small market but technically excellent

It's a funny thing, business software. For most of the time, it's vaguely sensible things like word processors and cash flow calculators, but then there's odd pieces of business software like this – created for a mysterious minority. Tas Sign is such a product, it's main feature is to create banner length signs in positively HUGE lettering.

Tas Sign is in two distinct parts. The configuration part and the main printing seciton. The configuration section merely defines the types of printer and interface and the screen colours.

Within the utility are countless options all concerned with the finished style of the poster or banner. You can change the way it prints from across the paper to down the paper and vice versa. You can change between the 4 types of lettering and the different types of spacing. You can print a border of varying widths and patterns and you can shade within letters to make nice effects. Then you can print.



Altogether, a competent package, and one that is very simple to use■

★★★★☆ ★★★☆☆ **7**

ACTION REFLEX

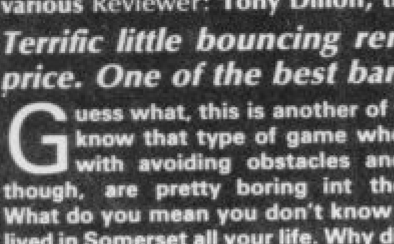
ARCADE Label: **Ricochet** Price: **£1.99** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **various** Reviewer: **Tony Dillon, the crisp bringer**

Terrific little bouncing rerelease and an affordable price. One of the best bargains of the year

Guess what, this is another of those bouncy ball type games. You know that type of game when you have to do all the business with avoiding obstacles and all that. Most of them games, though, are pretty boring int they? But this one's quite good. Eh? What do you mean you don't know what I'm talking about. Oh, you've lived in Somerset all your life. Why didn't you say so. I'll start again, shall I? (Hoi! I know people that live in Somerset! – Ed)

In AR, you play a little chequered ball, that has to bounce down a long corridor, avoiding all the things littered about the place, like the magnets that catch you, or the holes that make you fall to your death if you land on one.

Graphics are nice and clear, with the game relying more on recognisability more than realism, with huge horseshoe magnets and darts. The game scrolls along at a nice fast pace and is very very playable. One of the budget year's best buys, and if it doesn't make it into the top 10 budget games, I'll eat my granny and her bathchair (That's age-ist – Ed)■



★★★★☆ ★★★★☆ **8**

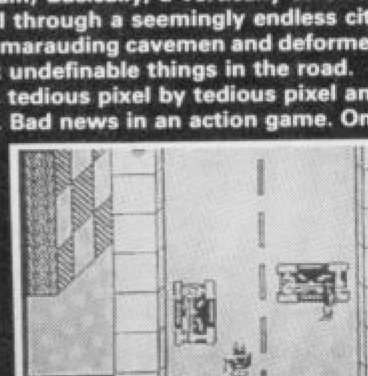
LA SWAT

ARCADE Label: **Mastertronic** Price: **£2.99** Author: **Beech Nut Software** Memory: **48K/128K** Joystick: **various** Reviewer: **Tony Dillon**

Very popular when first released on other machines, though not very good, is bound to be very popular on the Speccy and is still not very good

A SWAT team is a very exciting all action thing. So it naturally follows it would make an exciting and generally profit making game, right? Wrong. LA Special Weapons and Tactics is one of the worst games I have ever played (again) Basically, a vertically scrolling Commando sort of jobbie, you patrol through a seemingly endless city street shooting your little pop gun at marauding cavemen and deformed shoppers alike, whilst avoiding black undefinable things in the road.

The scrolling is astoundingly slow, tedious pixel by tedious pixel and the controls respond very sluggishly. Bad news in an action game. One nice touch is the way they have avoided the game slowing when there is a lot on screen by making the game to impossibly slow that if it slowed down any more, it wouldn't be moving. Har har. Awful■



★☆☆☆☆ ★☆☆☆☆ **2**

ZONE



If there's one thing you can surely say about an arch-villain, that is that the guy won't give up without a fight. If there's a sequel in the offing, your really suave super criminal won't be left languishing in jail when the credits are rolling.

And thank god for that, because if it wasn't for such incredible tenacity on the behalf of the Mekon, you wouldn't be able to cop hold of **Dan Dare II,** the Mekon's Revenge.

For those of you who were **Dan Dare** fans, this new game will cause no end of excitement. You may want to skip this paragraph because this is the boring background bit to fill in those silly people who've never even heard of **Dan Dare,** and that, she said, shamefacedly, includes myself.

The Mekon is a very unappealing (both physically and mentally speaking) alien of the obligatory green colour, and his main aim (the thought that dominates all other inside that little dome-shaped head), is to take over the earth. Last year, he was foiled by gold old DD, and this year, having spent quite enough time sulking thank you, he's back, and he's got a new plan.

(Welcome back all **Dan Dare I** fans.) The Mekon's new plan is to release a genetically



engineered race called the Supertreens on to the earth and let them get on with all the rampaging and pillaging. Then he can snaffle up all the glory and rule Earth to his heart's content. Fortunately, DD is there to spoil his dastardly plans, and rescue us poor saps. And this is how he does it:

Armed to the back teeth with a sort of machine gun affair, DD rides his awesomely powerful jet-bike on to the Mekon's ship,

FACTS BOX

Some disappointments over the central graphics. The backgrounds are pretty but DD fans may be disappointed

DAN DARE II
Label: Virgin
Author: Gang of Five
Price: £9.95
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Tamara Howard

★★★★☆ ★★★☆☆ **7**

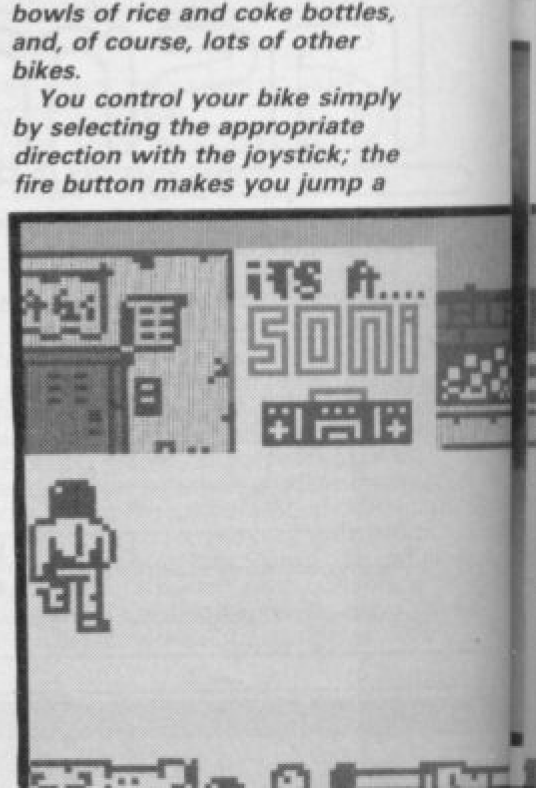


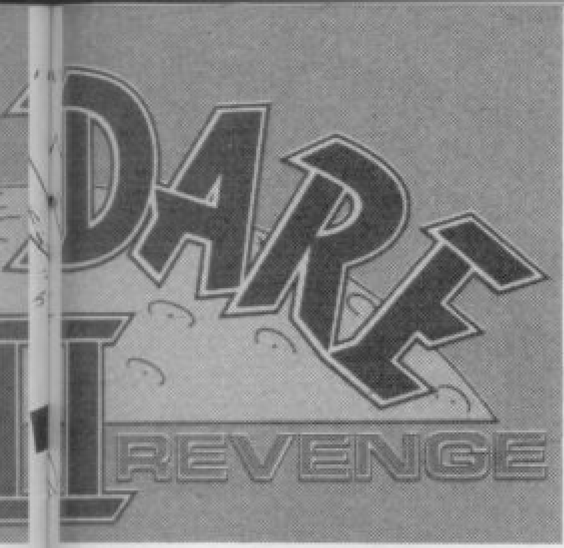
TOUR DE

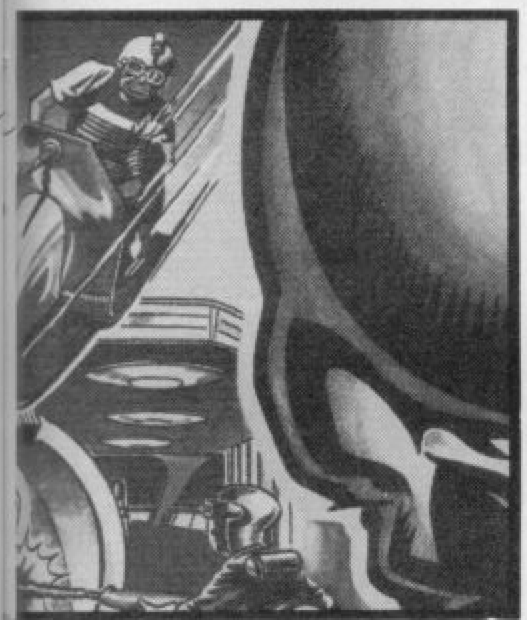
Tour de Force? Hardly. If anything, Gremlin's pedal-to-the-metal bike racing game is a disappointment compared to Activision's oldie Tour de France *(which presumably is to blame for the newer game's odd title).* Tour de Force *(it means "masterpiece") is a horizontally-scrolling comedy bicycle racing game, so it's unique in that respect. Unfortunately I found it much too slow, jerky and cluttered to recapture much of the atmosphere of the mad dash over the Alps (or wherever it is) with the yellow-jerseyed leader pumping the old pedals like mad to stay ahead of the one who drinks lots of milk.*

The top half of the screen shows the race track. Each level is set in a different country; the first is in Japan, so the course is cluttered with obstacles such as Sumo wrestlers, hay bales and barriers, objects such as bowls of rice and coke bottles, and, of course, lots of other bikes.

You control your bike simply by selecting the appropriate direction with the joystick; the fire button makes you jump a







with the express aim of nobbling all the cute little Supertreens, who are all asleep in little glass pods. (Ah, diddums.) Accompanying Dan are a few chums in need of a bit of exercise.

The opening sequence is rather stunning. A ship flies through space, beautifully detailed. Choose your options, controls and so on as usual, then decided whether you want to play DD or the Mekon.

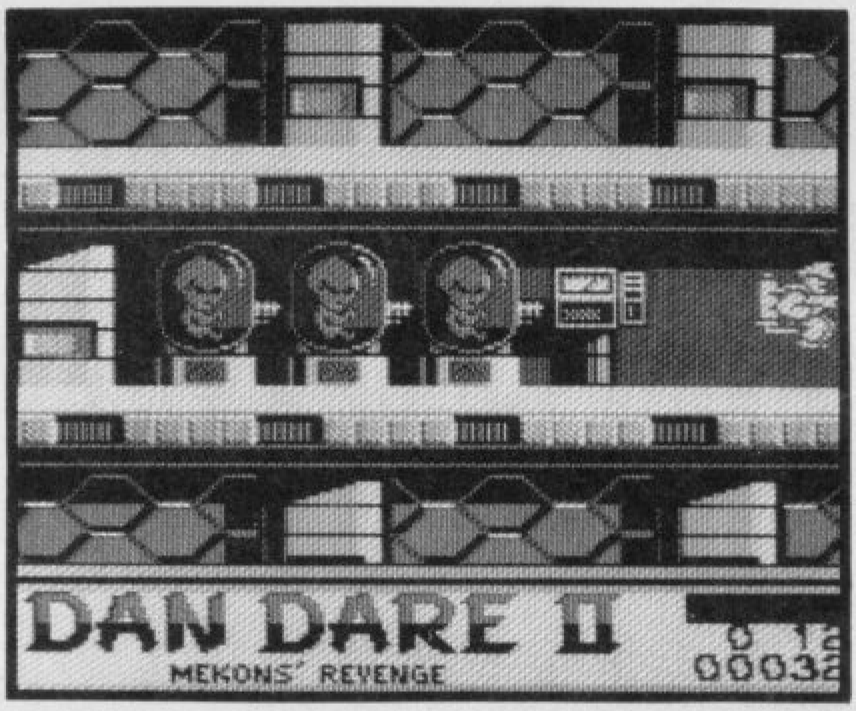
I should point out here, that if you want to play the Mekon, there's no point in trying to kill the Supertreens, all you have to do is kill Dan and friends.

The interiors of the ship are also wonderful. Well detailed, with a good, almost comic book feel about them, well up to the first game's previous high standards. But then, after the backgrounds, things got a tad wobbly.

Anything that moves is naff. A bald statement (nearly as bald as the Mekon, arf arf), but sadly true. It's almost as if someone completely different put the moving characters on after everyone else had gone home. Spindly, flickery white sprites that all look alike, tear around the place like nobody's business. One of the big problems with **Dan Dare II** is that there are two separate things going on at once. There are members of Dan's squadron flying around (all looking like Dan), fighting members of the Mekon's forces (also looking rather like Dan). So trying to find your own piddly little sprite is very hard.

Not only is finding your sprite tough, but controlling the little beggar is a nightmare. The jet bike seems to have a mind of his own, and tears around all over the place. It's enough to give you treble vision and dyspepsia just looking at the thing.

Should you be a thoroughly intelligent person and be able to suss out just how to control your bike, you'll find the gameplay itself highly taxing. The ship is made up of four levels, each containing a certain number of Supertreens. Not only are the STs asleep behind



ARCADE REVIEW

glass they're protected by a force field that you have to work your way through. How to do it is tricky, and you've only got a certain amount of time to do it. Once your time is up, the security system will locate you and terminate you without so much as a by your leave. And just so's everything's fair, if you're playing the Mekon, you'll get mullered too.

Along the way there are things to help you, energy blocks to replenish your stamina come in extra handy. But watch out for the suction tubes which will deposit you outside the ship's along with all the other waste, the Treens who will try and shoot you, the security system and the numerous other alien horrors waiting to make life difficult for you.

Dan Dare II is a very hard game to get into. That's not to say it's a bad game. It needs patience and a lot of skill to get through it. If you have that patience you could find it thoroughly rewarding, spindly graphics or no. But if you want something that you're going to be able to sit down and play straight off, go for something else, **Dan Dare II** doesn't make life easy for you■

FORCE

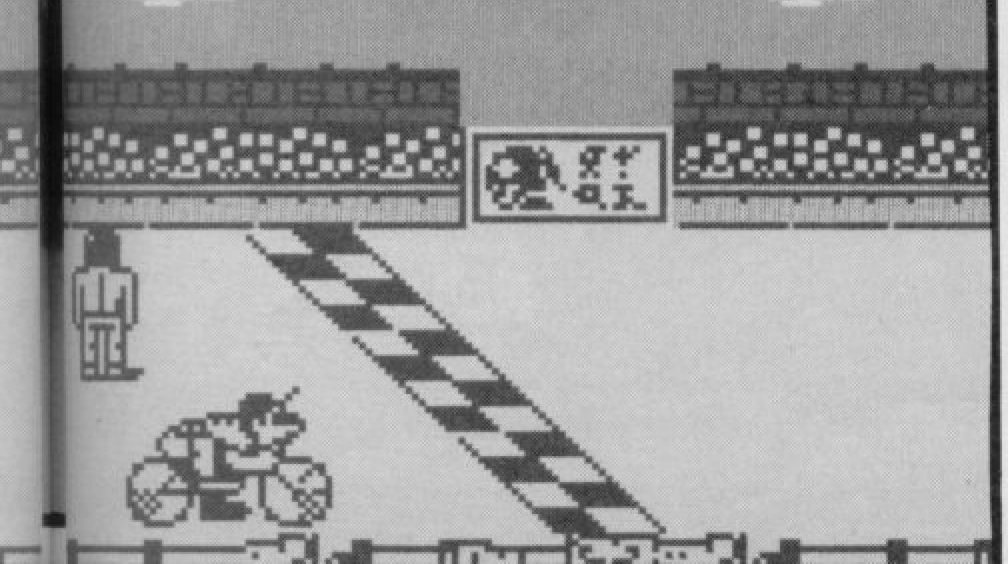
small distance into the air. This doesn't seem to do you much good, on its own except if you hit a ramp, so that you fly over the heads of your opponents.

To the right of the screen is your heat guage. If you stay out in front for too long (which is obviously the best way to avoid collisions) you will overheat and lose a life. Picking up coke bottles brings down your temperature.

In the middle of the screen is a map of the course, and a sixty-second timer which you must beat to complete each stage. Also shown are your position, score, and a leering face which presumably indicates your state of health. After falling off three times, hitting a crash barrier and piling into a Sumo, you don't look too happy.

If you win a level, which is pretty difficult considering how easy it is to lose track of which cycle you're controlling, your little cyclist throws up his arms with joy as he passes the line, and you get to load the next level from the tape. Oddly enough, France looks very much like Japan.

What lets the game down is the jerky scrolling; the fact that all the cyclists are identical, so you get confused easily; and the annoying way in which your opponents ride happily through barriers, but if you try it, you end up splattered over the concrete. Even this isn't particularly well done; a shot pause, a cloud of dust and the caption CRASH. No hum. Pull the other one, Gremlin – it's got bells on■



FACTS BOX

Neither Mean Streak nor Tour do France, this awkward race game fails to take the chequered flag

TOUR DE FORCE
Label: Gremlin Graphics
Author: Tim Miller
Price: £7.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Chris Jenkins

★★★☆☆ ★★★☆☆ **6**





STRATEGY SIMULATION REVIEW

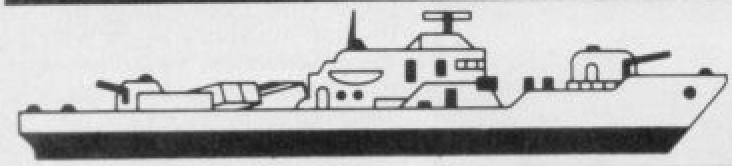
FACTS BOX

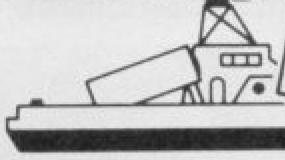
Ambitious strategy/simulation which doesn't quite deliver the thrills you might expect

PHM PEGASUS
Label: Electronic Arts
Author: Lucasgames
Price: £8.95
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: Kempston

Reviewer: Chris Jenkins

★★★★☆☆ 6





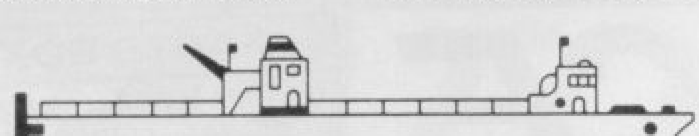
PHM PEGASUS

Yo-ho-ho, splice the mainbrace (what is a mainbrace anyway?), here's another chance to put to the open sea, visit exotic surroundings, and then blow them to bits. This time, you man not a battleship or a pirate galleon, but an oh-so-modern hydrofoil, a sort of boat that thinks it's on skis. The game take you all the way from basic training, through various search-and-destroy, surveillance and escort missions, and on to a mega-apocalyptic total war scenario.

The opening screen consists of a map depicting the area off Key West. From this you move to your bridge display, which shows a view from the cockpit, your controls, a radar display and weapons aiming system.

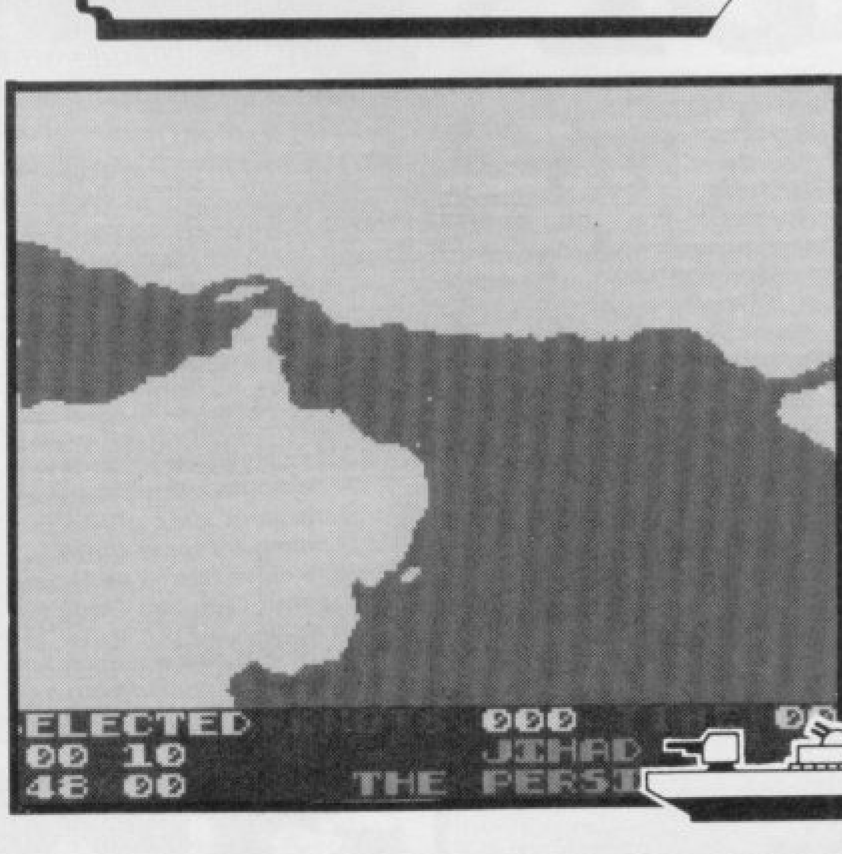
Various weapons are at your disposal; guns, for short-range work finishing off enemy ships; sea-to-sea and sea-to-air missiles for distant targets and aircraft; and chaff (clouds of radar-confusing reflective foil) to ward off homing missiles from enemies.

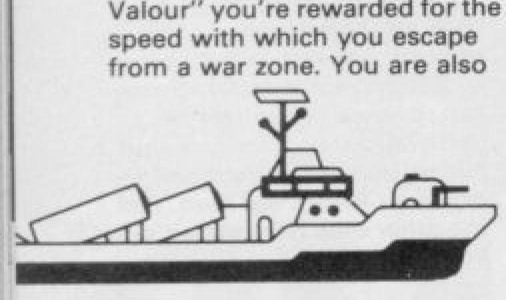
Points are awarded according to how close you get to completing the mission; for instance, in "terrorist attack", for sinking enemy gunboats, but in "The Better Part of Valour" you're rewarded for the speed with which you escape from a war zone. You are also awarded a rank for each stage. The instrument display is pretty complex without being too detailed but the screen graphics are pretty unremarkable. The gyrocompass indicates your current heading, while the RPM shows your engine speed, the Speed meter your actual rate in knots. The range of the radar can be adjusted to show only close targets, or long distance ones, and there are also depthmeters, fuel gauges, weapons status indicators and a graphic display of damage sustained.

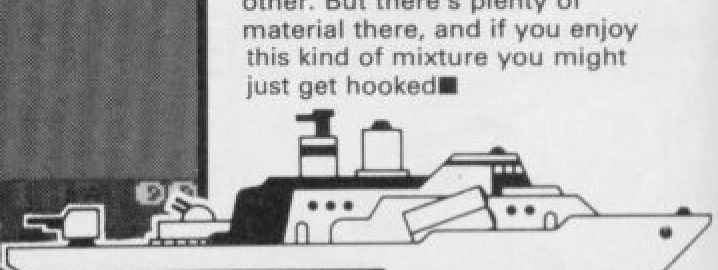


The manual goes into a great deal of detail about your weapons systems, scenarios, and possible enemies you will encounter. In this sense **PHM Pegasus** is very much like the popular Microprose simulations such as **Gunship.** The large number of easily-confused control keys are also familiar, but there doesn't seem to be much of the excitement of the Microprose programs. Time compression allows you to play through the scenarios at up to 128 times faster than normal, so you can speed up to skip the long journeys. This can lead to missiles pursuing you at eight times normal speed, though.

PHM Pegasus was developed by the Lucasfilm games team, responsible for several Activision hits including **Rescue on Fractalus, The Eidolon** and **Ballblazer.** It isn't as innovative as any of these; falling half-way between a simulation and an arcade game. Sadly, it doesn't quite capture the depth of the one or the excitement of the other. But there's plenty of material there, and if you enjoy this kind of mixture you might just get hooked■







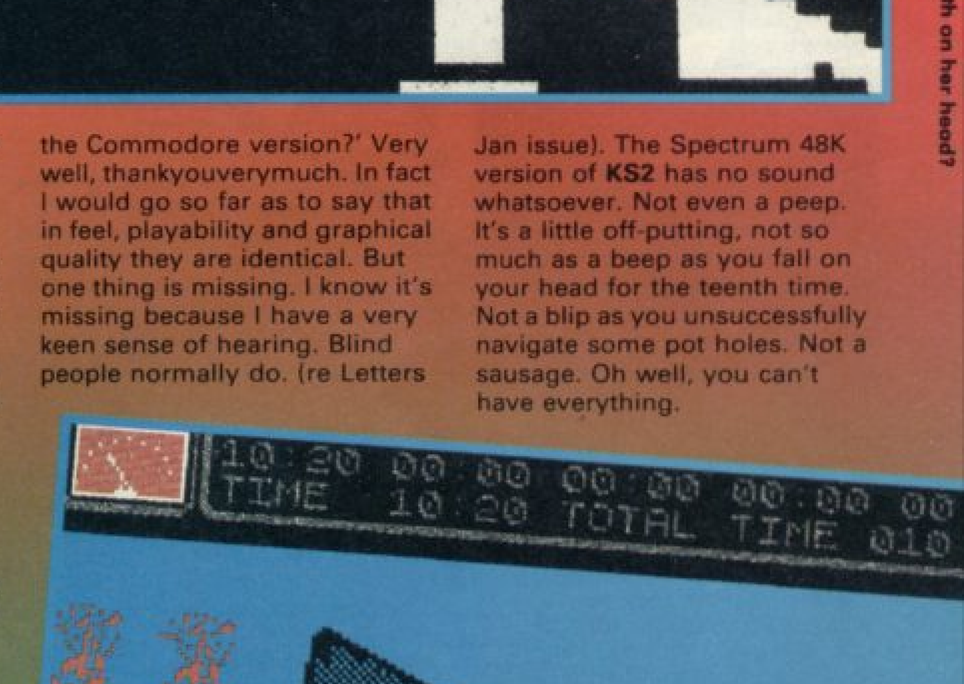


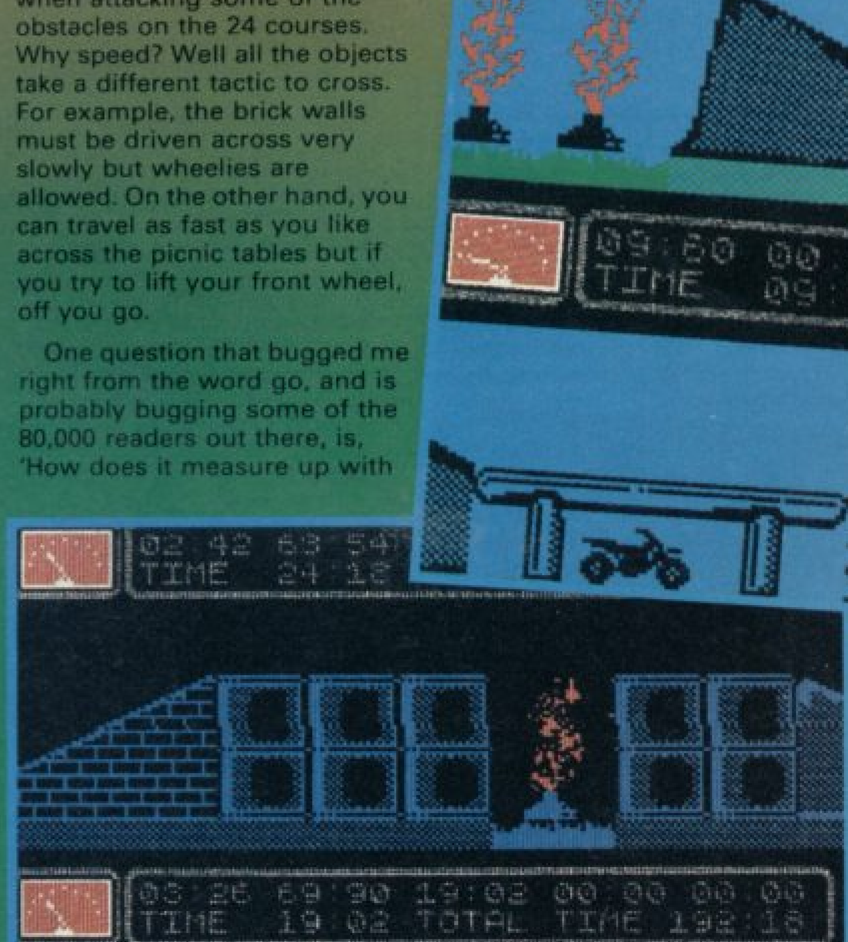
Now, correct me if I'm wrong, but I was never aware that **Kickstart** was ever available on the Spectrum, but I suppose that it must, otherwise they would never have released **Kickstart 2**, or would they? They released **Speed King 2**, but the original was never laid under the rubber mat, so to speak. But Grim is waving his hand frantically at me, so I better stop criticising M-tronic's release style and get down to steel pins.

KS2 is, to put it in a pigeon hole, a two player, horizontally scrolling scrambling simulation. You know what scrambling is, you've probably seen it on the telly. (Well I know that none of you have ever done it because you're either glued to your Spectrum or glued to SU, reading my wicked reviews). It's that weird sport where everybody rides round on undersized motorbikes (The Reliant Robins of the Honda world) trying to get over such obstacles as tyres and narrow walls. To completely reproduce the sport on a computer, it would need bike steering control as well as speed and wheelie options. No mean feat, so M-tronic have opted for a far simpler side view in which you take it as read that your on screen counterpart is perfect at steering and has left it up to you to do the rest.

The screen is split in two halves with each of the two players (or one player and the computer) taking a view. A speedometer in the corner tells you your velocity, a feature vital when attacking some of the obstacles on the 24 courses. Why speed? Well all the objects take a different tactic to cross. For example, the brick walls must be driven across very slowly but wheelies are allowed. On the other hand, you can travel as fast as you like across the picnic tables but if you try to lift your front wheel, off you go.

One question that bugged me right from the word go, and is probably bugging some of the 80,000 readers out there, is, 'How does it measure up with the Commodore version?' Very well, thankyouverymuch. In fact I would go so far as to say that in feel, playability and graphical quality they are identical. But one thing is missing. I know it's missing because I have a very keen sense of hearing. Blind people normally do. (re Letters Jan issue). The Spectrum 48K version of **KS2** has no sound whatsoever. Not even a peep. It's a little off-putting, not so much as a beep as you fall on your head for the teenth time. Not a blip as you unsuccessfully navigate some pot holes. Not a sausage. Oh well, you can't have everything.





FACTS BOX

Graphically pleasing and with a great atmosphere of 'just one more go'. Shame about the sound

KICKSTART 2
Label: Mastertronic
Authors: Icon Design
Price: £1.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Tony Dillon

★★★★☆ 8

But, I hear you cry, is that all. No, Dillonites (Dillonites? I'm not at all sure about this – Ed), that is not all, for not only do you get 24 complete courses set over dry land during the day or night, or snow even, but you get a full spanking course designer which allows you to build, without planning permission, a complete new track. Ooooh! The designer is very easy to use and once you've created the track, you can race on it. All fer two knicker. Now that's what I call a bargain!■

Q What do you call a woman with a public footpath on her head?

A Anne.



INCREDIBLE FEETS

Shoes glorious shoes. (One more pun like that and you're out – Ed) Universal, international, character revealing and getting quite expensive these days. You can tell a man by the way he laces his shoes, as the old proverb goes.



Or more comprehensibly, what are you wearing on your feet? Well, according to Shelly's Shoes of London, the most popular lads' shoes are (pop pickers)

1▶ **Doc Marten** – For people who like their foot in their air-sole
2▶ **Chelsea Boot** – Pah! Shoes for retired Metropolitan Police Constables
3▶ **Commando-style brogue** – Classical elegance losing out to ugly trendies...
4▶ **Loafer** – Hopeless wimpy girly flowery monstrosities.
5▶ **Western Shoe** (Shown here) – Ah, some taste at last! Refined, reserved, ridiculous.

What a boring lot shoe-buyers are, I'll not be satisfied until the return of outsized big-buckle sandals are back.

JIM DOUGLAS

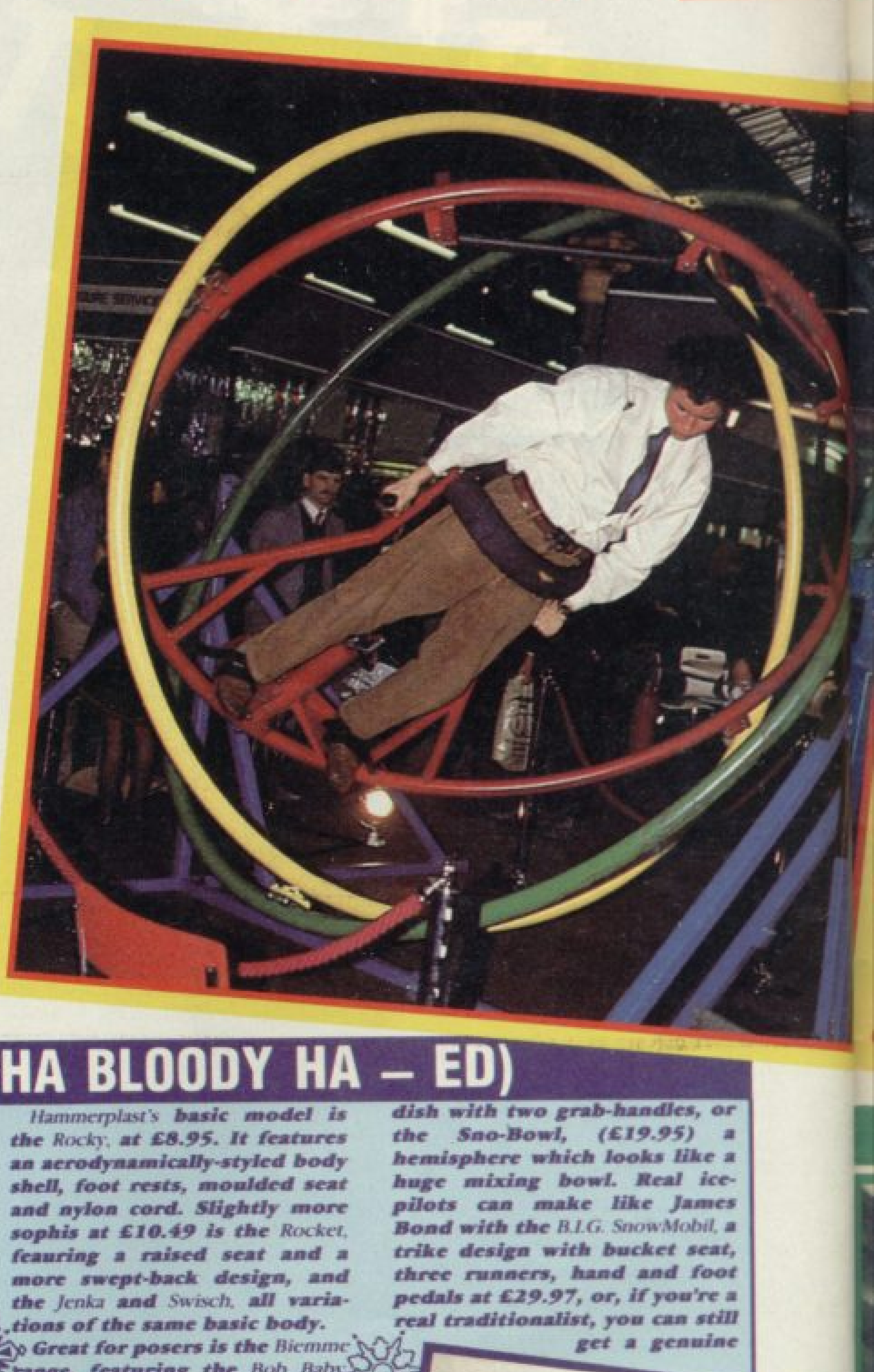
CHEAP TAPES

1 **Life in the fast lane.** The best rock compilation of all time. £6.99*
2 **Now 10** Yes, I know people are fed up with them, but this one is good. £7.99
3 **Greatest Folk songs of all time.** Yeah, this is well wicked and hip and crucial. £14.99
4 **Hits 6** Another goodie in a long line of goodies. £7.99
5 **Chart Show collection** A great collection of 12 inch greats. £6.99
6 **Animal – Def Leppard** (The cass single) A very successful single, with a terrific B side. £3.99
7 **Powerslave – Iron Maiden** IM at their best, and at the price!! £3.99
8 **Hits 7** On jesus, not another one. £7.99
9 **Reason to Live – Kiss** (The Cassette single) A terrific sentimental rock song with 3 B sides. Who could ask for more. £3.99
10 **Queen II** Probably Lord Frederick of Lucan and co. at their best. £2.99

Chart compiled by hip dude Tony Dillon.

* Well, this is the cheapest we could find, don't pay anything more!

ÖUTLA



IT'SNOW JOKE (HA BLOODY HA – ED)

Blame Michael Fish if you like, but the shortage of snow hasn't stopped the shops from stocking up on the latest hi-tech sledges. Traditional wood and metal are out, replaced by fluorescent pressure-moulded plastics. So it's "bums away".

Hammerplast's ***basic model is the*** *Rocky*, ***at £8.95. It features an aerodynamically-styled body shell, foot rests, moulded seat and nylon cord. Slightly more sophis at £10.49 is the*** *Rocket*, ***feauring a raised seat and a more swept-back design, and the*** *Jenka* ***and*** *Swisch*, ***all variations of the same basic body.***

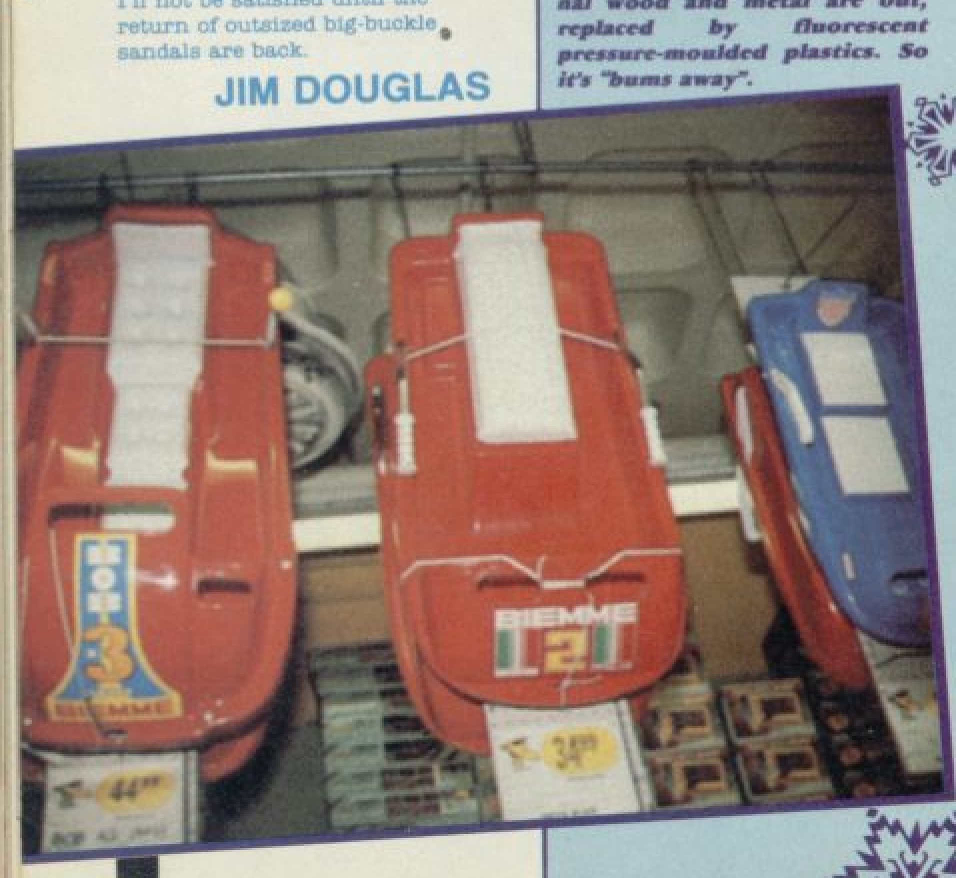
Great for posers is the *Biemme* ***range, featuring the*** *Bob Baby* ***(£18.99),*** *Bobx2* ***(£34.99) and*** *Bobx3* ***(£49.99); all styled like bobsleds, with raised shields, one, two or three padded seats, dual steering levers/brakes and towing cords. A similar alternative at £29.95 is the oddly-named*** *Silver Bogie*

If you like a bit more excitement, go for a Sno-Cat Saucer (£7.99), simply a large yellow dish with two grab-handles, or the Sno-Bowl, (£19.95) a hemisphere which looks like a huge mixing bowl. Real ice-pilots can make like James Bond with the *B.I.G. SnowMobil*, ***a trike design with bucket seat, three runners, hand and foot pedals at £29.97, or, if you're a real traditionalist, you can still get a genuine wooden sledge with steel braces and runners from*** *Padgett* ***for a mere £12.99.***

Finally, for complete crazies, try the £2.29 *Hammarplast Bumster* ***(my name, not theirs). It's a simple heart-shaped plastic plate with a handle; stick it between your legs, hold on tight and slide into oblivion. . .***

Chris Jenkins







A No eyed-deer.

Q What do you call Bambi when he's blind?

ANDS

THUNDERBLADE



At the Amusement Trade Exhibition held recently at Olympia, *Thunder Blade* from Sega stood out head and shoulders above the rest of the games. Not because it's in a large new cabinet – which it is – but because it's a highly innovative and challenging chopper simulation.

The game has been designed to look and feel like a helicopter it has a joystick which slots between your knees, a video screen which sits at your feet and a cabinet which is mounted on helicopter skids. You feel as though you are high above the ground in a perspex transparent cockpit.

The game itself is tremendously exciting, – you steer your chopper (OOer) through narrow streets between skyscrapers, over the ocean to bomb enemy aircraft carriers and through weird landscapes where the slightest uncontrolled move sends you hurtling into the ground or crashing into a tree.

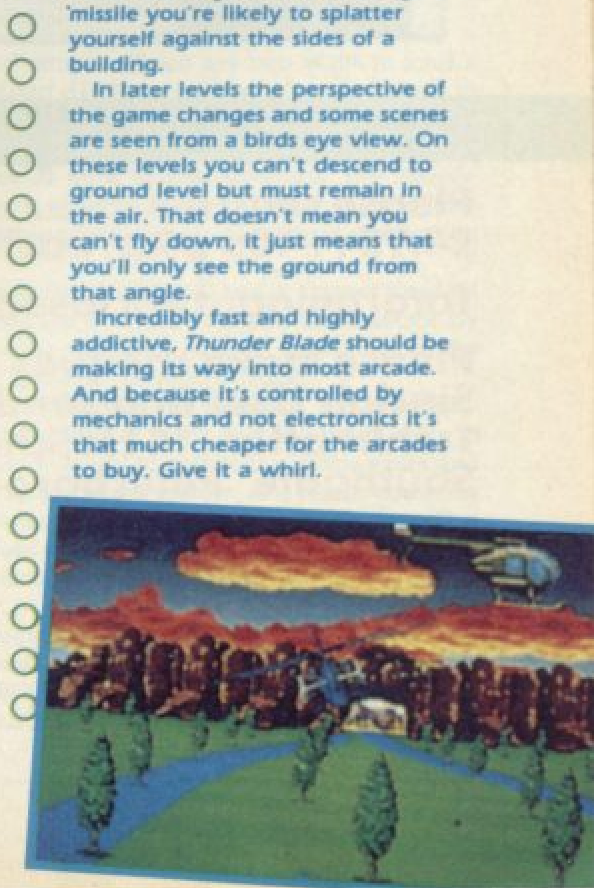
The game is made even more realistic by the rocking of the cabinet which swings from side to side as you gently nudge your joystick left and right. Pushing forward on the stick sends you into a dive, pull back and you rise. A gear with different speed settings lets you control the craft to such a high degree that you can even come to a dead stop and hover, though that means you're a sitting duck for any stray missiles.



The game starts off over a city whose streets are patrolled by massive tanks and enemy helicopters. You've got two choices, either bomb the enemy from the safety of the skies above skyscraper level or descend to just above the ground and strafe them as you skim towards them. Just remember, if you need to dodge a missile you're likely to splatter yourself against the sides of a building.

In later levels the perspective of the game changes and some scenes are seen from a birds eye view. On these levels you can't descend to ground level but must remain in the air. That doesn't mean you can't fly down, it just means that you'll only see the ground from that angle.

Incredibly fast and highly addictive, *Thunder Blade* should be making its way into most arcade. And because it's controlled by mechanics and not electronics it's that much cheaper for the arcades to buy. Give it a whirl.



GYROMAN

Amusement parks will never be the same once the Gyroscope hits them later in the year. It's the latest "ride-on", craze, even though it doesn't have a motor and doesn't move anywhere.

Confused? You will be after a few minutes spinning in the specially-designed harness. The three interlocking steel rings are fixed in position while you climb into the framework and buckle yourself in. Then you grab hold of the handles mounted above your head, the operator releases the bolts and you start spinning.

Each of the three rings spins on a different axis, so you can pitch, yaw and roll just like an astronaut in free-fall. Unlike an astronaut, though, you must remember that you're still under the influence of gravity, and the contents of your pockets will spill everywhere when you turn upside down.

The Gyroscope was launched at the 44th Amusement Trade Exhibition, by fun-mongers Smiling Lion. In the excitement over the latest video games it might have gone unnoticed if it wasn't for the fact that everyone was queueing up to have a go on it. Look out for the Gyroscope at your nearest fun park soon .....

Chris Jenkins

COIN OPS OF THE MONTH – MARCH

1	Operation Wolf	Taito
2	Streetfighter	Capcom
3	Guerilla Wars	SNK
4	Vigilante	IREM Corp
5	Shinobi	Sega
6	Xenothobe	Bally
7	Top Speed	Taito
8	Wec Le Man	Konami
9	Twin Cobra	Taito
10	Mr Heli	Taito

This list is compiled with the help of one arcade in London's West End, and is not necessarily the case countrywide. Thanks to John Stergides.

PREYING FOR SURVIVAL



If you go down in the woods today ...

The man who began his screen career by offering anyone "... a body like mine..." is back, recovering from the absurd Raw Deal haircut and icing the guerillas in Predator.

The movie is set deep in a sticky old jungle somewhere just south of civilisation where a number of American boys have been captured by the vast numbers of expendable communist extras who get mown down within the first twenty minutes.

Arnie and his men soon discover that their rescue mission is about to get a whole lot more complicated, and it will be quite a feat to rescue themselves from the mysterious being that's stalking the jungle, tearing any human it finds limb from limb.

The bad guy proves to be pretty nifty, managing to destroy everyone in the unit except – well blow me – Arnold who has to go through all manner of dreadfully stressful experiences before he can; well I won't spoil it for you (Pah! – Ed). Anyway it's got an 18 certificate so half of you shouldn't be able to see it anyway.

And so we have a kind of Rambo meets Rabid ET in the Congo. Lots of killing (I mean lots) all very well filmed and lots of muscles. You won't have any trouble following the plot though you'll probably find yourself wishing that Arnie would at least pull a hamstring now and again, just to prove he's human.

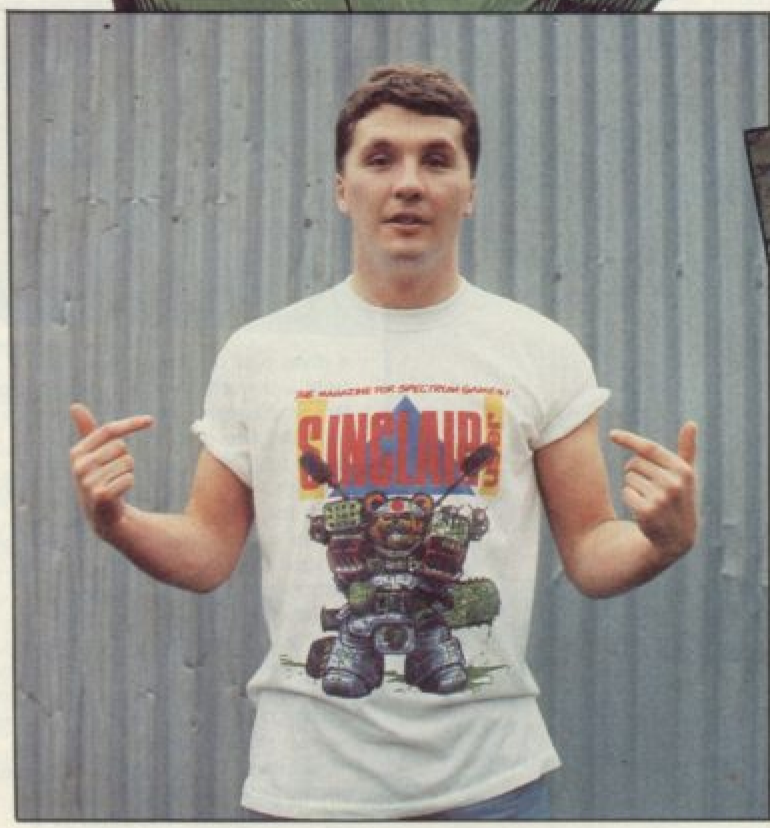
Q What do you call Bambi when he's blind and he's lost all his legs?

A Still no eyed-deer.

ATTENTION ALL SU READERS!



Colonel Kamikazi insists that this is an offer no SU reader would dare to refuse. All you have to do to get your paws on this mega T-shirt is fill in the coupon below and send a cheque for £4.95+40p p&p.





Please send me ____________ T-shirts at £4.95 (+40p p&p) each. Size M/XL

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Name ____________

Address ____________

If you don't, we'll just have to send the bears round!



AS GOOD AS A +3?

Roy Stead investigates Miles Gordon's +D – the new disc drive interface threatening to superceed the +3

Got a Spectrum which isn't a Plus 3? Join the majority. So what are you going to do about getting your tape software onto ultra-post disc?

When Baron Alan Sugar d'Amstrad launched the Plus 3, everyone became aware of the advantages of disc. It's faster than tape; it's more reliable than tape; and with a disc you can do clever things like loading a specified program from any position on the disc, or searching for programs and data files using "pattern matching" sorting techniques. For games players, the main advantage is that you can sort your huge piles of cassettes into a few fast-loading discs.

The **Plus D** is an interface which connects any Spectrum except the Plus 3 to a 3.5 inch or 5.25 inch disc drive. Bear in mind that these aren't the same as the 3 inch drive built into the Plus 3, so it won't allow you to use any software released for the Plus 3.

Like the various microdrive interfaces on the market, the **Plus D** allows you to take "snapshots" of the Spectrum's 48K or 128K memory, or just the screen, and save it to disc. On a double-sided disc you have 780K of storage space, so you could get two 128K snapshots, eleven 48K snapshots and the odd screen file onto one disc. Handy, yes?

When you first plug in the **Plus D**, you need to let it know what type of disc drive or printer you are using. This is done by loading up a system program and answering a handful of questions on its set-up menu.

From then on, all you have to do is load your favourite program from tape, press the reset button to zap it onto disc, then reload any 48K program in about three seconds!

Since you can transfer the program at any point, this allows you to save games at high levels if you don't want to go trudging through the early stages every time you play. You can also dump graphic screens directly to the printer, or save them to disc for printouts later.

The manual is written in plain English, and the syntax used to control the disc drive is very much like that of the Microdrive. The **Plus D** is compatible with the Disciple, an earlier product which also features joystick ports and various other widgets, and both can be used with a number of "werious" packages such as **Tasword 2**, **Devpac Assembler**, **The Last Word**, **Masterfile** and many more. Kempston is currently working on an Amiga-like window/icon/mouse desktop system using the **Plus D**.

The command syntax is dead simple. There are two ways to load a program from disc; either use *Load* d1 "Program Name", or use *Cat* 1 to produce a list of all the programs on the disc together with a file number, and use *Load* p(number).

It's also easy to use the **Plus D** as a printer interface; the *Poke@* command is used to set line length, spacing, margins and so on, and *Llist*, *Lprint* and *Save Screens* are used to produce normal or large-size screen dumps.

But it's as a disc-drive interface that the **Plus D** really shines; it's ideal for beginners or advanced users (as you can examine discs sector by sector if you wish), and there's an excellent support service from the Independent Disciple and Plus D Users' Group (INDUG).

At £49.95 for the interface, or £129.95 for the interface and a double-sided double-density 80-track disc drive, it won't cost you much more to invest in a **Plus D** and drive than it would to sell your old Spectrum and invest in a Plus 3. The **Plus D** is an excellent system, and unless someone brings out a product which allows you to transfer tape software onto Plus 3 three-inch discs, it's the perfect choice for anyone who is fed up with waiting five minues for their games to load.

Roy Stead

Product: Plus D disc/printer interface
Supplier: Miles Gordon Technology, Unit 4, Chesterton Mill, French's Road, Cambridge, CB4 3NP, 0223-311665
Price: £49.95, or £129.95 with 3.3" disc drive. 5.25" drives also available.

Hello and welcome to the new style Help Line compiled this month with the help of Damien Scattergood from the Isle of Man. By way of a special treat this month I

HOW THE

... DO YOU ADD EXTRA COMMANDS TO BASIC

A question from Philip Veale of Cornwall. There are several methods. I have described previously making use of the Spectrum error trapping system to drop out of Basic into a customised machine code routine, dropping back into Basic on completion. The system is a bit tricky for beginners so this month we will describe a simpler technique of using a small interpreter to read Rem statements which contain the new commands.

The interpreter can be called just before the line containing the Rem. This way we can still use normal Rem statements only interpreting the ones required. This mini interpreter would look like that in table 1.

```
100 .........
110 Randomise Usr 60000
120 Rem — INSTRUCTIONS —
130 .........
```

Table 1 Simple Rem interpreter in use

The secret to interpreting the Rems is to understand how thay are stored in memory. The storage format is quite simple. Table 2 should give you a good understanding of this. As you can see there are four bytes of memory for the line number and line length. We can skip over these 4 bytes as we don't need to interpret them. Next comes the number 243 the code for a Rem command. This we also skip over. After this every character's ASCII value is stored in memory, in single byte form. The last value stored is 13 which is the

```
        LD HL (NXT-LIN)          ; Get line address
        INC HL                   ; Skip over bytes
        INC HL
        INC HL
Start:  INC HL
        LD A, (HL)               ; Fetch letter
        CP "A"                   ; Test for "A"
        CALL Z, Fn 1             1 Execute the function
           :
           :    REMAINING LETTERS
           :
        CP 13     ;     End if CR
        RETZ
        JP Start     ; Repeat til end
Fn 1:   Push AF
        Push HL
        . . Function . .
        Pop HL
        Pop AF
        RET
```

Table 3. Outline of the assembler code for the extended interpreter. Note that the code which executes the functions itself is not included.

```
10 Border 0: Paper 0: Inks: CLS
20 Clear 59999:Gosub 1000
30 For G = 0 TO 20
40 Let = USR 60000
50 Rem A
60 Print At 20,0; Ink Rnd*7; "SINCLAIR USER SINCLAIR USER"
70 Next G
80 Let L = Usr 60000
90 Rem B B B B
100 Goto 30
1000 For N = 0 TO 57
1010 Read A: Poke 60000 + N, A
1020 Next N: Return
1030 Data 42, 85, 92, 35, 35, 35, 35, 35
1040 Data 126, 254, 65, 204, 121, 234
1050 Data 254, 66, 204, 129, 234
1060 Data 254, 13, 200, 195, 103, 234
1070 Data 245, 229, 205, 208, 12, 225
1080 Data 241, 201, 245, 229, 33 16, 0
1090 Data 17, 3, 0, 6, 150
1100 Data 229, 213, 197, 205, 181, 3
1110 Data 193, 209, 225, 35, 16, 244
1120 Data 225, 241, 201
```

Table 4: The extended interpreter in action.

(Andrew H

... DID YOU GET THAT FAB C

Most Spectrum games take 3 or 4 minutes to load from tape so most of them give you a loading screen to look to to keep you awake. Recently you'll have noticed some games have a few extra frills such as the removal of the irritating stripey border, or even a simulated tape counter to tell you how much longer you've got to wait (eg **Exolon**).

If you've ever tried to produce either of these effects and given up in frustration, or are just curious about how it's done, I'll give you a brief insight. I'll start with the stripey border (or lack of it) 'cos it's easier.

Due to the severe lack of hardware inside the Spectrum, loading a program from tape is almost entirely done by software. Buried deep within the Rom is a routine which, whilst loading, is continually scanning the tape input waiting for an 'edge' (that is, a rise or fall in the tape signal). This signifies the start of the next bit of data to be loaded in either (either a '0' or a '1'). Because the border colour of the display can be altered independent of the rest of the display, it doesn't require much more effort for the loading routine to also toggle the border colour between two colours when each edge is found. Since the data is loading at about 1500 bits each second this gives a quickly changing stripey effect.

Because the loading routine is in the Rom we can't change it. However by copying the routine into Rom we can then customise it to remove the bits which change the border. For those of you with some understanding of Z80 machine code, use a disassembler/monitor to look at the load routine (addresses $0556...$05E2).

```
        :                    ;edge has been found
05FA LD A,c                  ;get copy of colour
05FB CPL                     ;toggle the toggle
0FC LD C, A                  ;update copy
05FD AND 7                   ;isolate colour no 0...7
(change AND 7 to AND 0 to keep
border black)
05FF OR 8                    ;no tape output
0601 OUT (FE, A              ;set border colour
```

Tale 6. A snippet from the loader routine. This section creates the stripey border effect.

asked John Phillips, who wrote **Nebulus** fo us and who also knows a lot about the Spectrum tape loading system to write a piece about the tape loader on **Exolon.**

HELL!!!!!

Sample Line: 10 Rem ABC
Bytes in memory

0 10	0 6	243	32	65	66	67	13
Line Number	Line Length	Rem	Space	A	B	C	CR

Table 2. The format in which Basic lines are stored in memory

code for a carriage return.

The first step is to find the location in memory of the next line after our call to the new interpreter. This is fairly simple to do as the location is stored in the system variable *Nxt-Lin.* This variable is to be found at location 23637. So the first instruction in our interpreter will fetch the contents of this variable with a command such as LD HL, (*Nxt-Lin*). This will be our starting point. As seen earlier we then skip over the next five bytes. This is done by simply incrementing the HL register five times. HL now points to the first character to be interpreted. At this point we could interpret the line searching for whole words, but in this example we shall read each letter as a single command. We fetch the letter by using LD A, (HL). All this is needed now is to examine this data and then act accordingly. Afterwards the HL register must be incremented to point to the next character. We continue to do this until we reach the value 13 where we simply return.

Any routines we call however, must reserve the HL and AF registers as they are continually being used by our interpreter.

The entire program is simple to produce and can be seen in table 3. Now type in the example in table 4. In this example the letter 'A' will scroll the entire screen up 1 line. The letter 'B' will produce a zap! type sound.

(Hewson has the answer)

LOADER ON EXOLON?

Tape load routine at $0556
Entry: IX = address where we want to load the data
DE = number of bytes to load
A = 0 for header/1 for data
carry set for load

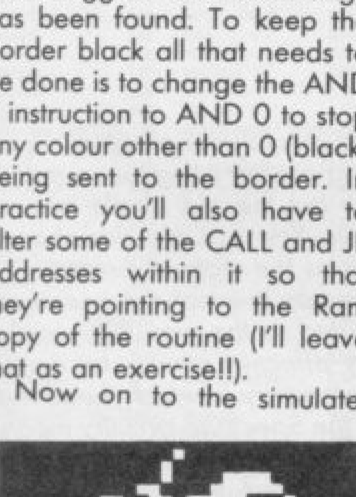
Table 5. Entry conditions for the Rom tape loader routine.

Table 5 gives the entry conditions.

Table 6 gives a brief snippet of code at the end of the routine which alters the border. Register C contains a copy of the current border colour and this is toggled after each edge has been found. To keep the border black all that needs to be done is to change the AND 7 instruction to AND 0 to stop any colour other than 0 (black) being sent to the border. In practice you'll also have to alter some of the CALL and JP addresses within it so that they're pointing to the Ram copy of the routine (I'll leave that as an exercise!!).

Now on to the simulated tape counter. This presents a much bigger problem because we're asking the machine to perform 2 tasks at once: load the program AND update the on screen counter. Why is this a problem? Well the trouble is that because of the rate at which data from the tape is coming in, the loading routine has to be ready at all times for the next bit of date to arrive. If it goes off to display some characters for the counter then when it gets back to scanning the tape input it will undoubtedly have missed some date.

However, all is not lost. Look at Table 7. This contains another snippet of code from the loading routine. What this actually does is wait around in a fixed delay for about 384 T states (about 110 microseconds) before scanning for an edge. It can do this because the time between two edges is always between 500-1000 microseconds (depending on whether the next bit is a '0' or a '1').





The useful thing about this from our point of view is that the Z80 is effectively doing nothing for about 20% of the time. Admittedly this free time is split up into lots of small chunks (time-slices), but if we want to display a counter we just need to split the code which does the job into lots of small chunks. The chunks can then be executed in place of the fixed delay.

There are basically two tasks performed to generate the counter: display the counter and then update its value. If we use a 3-digit counter and then update its value. If we use a 3-digit counter then this will be displayed as 8-bytes per digit ie: a total of 24 bytes for each time-slice. There's only really time to update a few bytes each time-slice so with a few extra time slices for updating the counter value we're talking about something like 16 time-slices to refresh the counter.

If we allow the digits to scroll up through 8-bytes rather than flip from one value to the next then we require 8*16 = 128 time-slices, which will allow us to count at about 11 units/second. Because the counter value is directly related to the number of bits read in from the tape file, we can set it initially to avalue proportional to the file length so that it will reach zero when the file has loaded.

So you can see it's easy isn't it? Now, if you want to prove that you are mega clever, write a game, split it up into chunks each less than 384T state long and write a tape loader which plays a game whilst loading is taking place!

JOHN PHILLIPS

```
05E7 LD A,16           ;delay count

05E9 DEC A             ;loop around for
OSEB JR NZ,05E9        ;about 384 T states
    :                  ;then look for edge
```

Table 7. The tape loader delay loop.

Gizmo gone bonkers? Can't get your thingy connected? Don't be afraid to tell us . . .

I'VE GOT THIS PROBLEM

I'VE GOT THIS PROBLEM

. . . WITH MY TV GOING ALL FUNNY . . .

MY next-door neighbour has a CB, and sometimes when he's using it my TV picture goes wavy and my Spectrum 128K+2 crashes whether it's playing a game or I'm programming with Basic. I know it happens when he is using his transmitter because I've got a CB receiver and can listen to him. He says it's not his problem. Is there anything I can do?

Dave Bergman
Cornbrook
Herts

● *The Spectrum has got all the bits of a radio receiver, carefully disguised as computer components, hidden away inside it. If a radio signal is strong enough these computer components forget about computing and start to receive instead. Crash.*

It's his problem if he's using an illegally high power or a massive aerial. If he's street legal, and has got a licence (ahem), then there's not a lot you can ask him to do, apart from move his aerial away from your computer. You can help matters by fitting a mains filter to your power supply, disconnecting long printer leads and investing in some ferrite toroids.

Ferrite toroids (like the mains filter, available from Tandy stores) are rings of compressed iron dust mixed with a ceramic compound.

You'll want two about 2-3 inches in diameter. When you get them, thread the end of the TV lead that goes into your Spectrum through one a few times, making a fairly tight winding as close to the plug on the lead as possible. Do the same for the power supply lead that plugs into the Spectrum, leaving as little lead as possible between the toroid and the 9V DC plug. It might seem like black magic, but it will stop any spurious radio waves picked up by the mains or the TV lead (which act as receiving aerials) finding their way into the sensitive underbelly of the Spectrum. At ***Surgery HQ*** *these little rings are used with gay abandon on videos, TV's and even Spectra. They work too.*

. . . WITH FINDING THE RIGHT DISC

WHERE can I find an inexpensive sort of disc drive, compatible with the Multiface One and my Spectrum 48K? Which is better: the Sinclair Interface One and Microdrive, the Rotronics Wafadrive or an Opus Discovery?

Are Microdrive cartridges still in production, and can the Opus use any 3.5 inch disc? And can **Tasword Two** and **Three** both use the Alphacom 32 printer?

Philip Longhurst
Tilehurst
Reading

● ***Interestingly, Sinclair Research still exists, and it makes a respectable amount of money by peddling Microdrive cartridges which are very much still in production. Whether it's a good idea to buy an Interface One is another matter — if you can get a new one with Microdrive at a reasonable price it should give reliable service. I wouldn't recommend buying a secondhand set-up as they are prone to wear at a slightly alarming rate.***

Neither the Rotronics Wafadrive nor the Opus are still being produced, but the Opus has the inestimable advantage of using standard discs which you can buy almost anywhere. Of the three options you ask about, the Opus is the one I'd go for.

Tasword Two/Three ***works with the Alphacom 32 printer, just select the Sinclair ZX Printer option.***

. . . WITH THE +3 ROM

RECENTLY I've written a number of machine-code programs which use Rom routines on my 128K+2. How different is the Rom in the +3, and will any of my programs work? Will I be able to use the disc drive from machine code, or will I have to go to Basic before I can load or save a file?

Adrian Black
Harrogate
Yorkshire

● ***There were effectively two Roms in the 128K+2. One was very similar to the original Spectrum's Rom and the other held the music, editor and Ramdisc code. There are now four such Roms in the 128K+3, with the two new ones containing extra bits of Basic and the disc operating system if you used any of the 128K+2's new (and undocumented) routines, you'll find that they've moved. The disc drive software is designed to be very easy to use from machine code, and there is (unusually) lots of information and sample programs in the Spectrum 128K+3 handbook to help matters.***

. . . WITH NOISES ON MY SPECCY

WHAT'S wrong? I have a Spectrum 128K+2, and I've read with interest of the problems that some people have with sound. I seem to be having a different set of problems, and I can't understand what's going on.

If I write a program in Basic to produce music using strings (*Play A$etc*) it all seems to work and sound fine. But on loading games in 128K mode the music reproduction is very poor and almost inaudible. If my listings run happily, then the sound circuits can't be at fault. So I fail to see what's wrong.

G Robson
Hunmanby
Filey

● *There are two possible answers to your problem. The first is that the games you are running are not using the sound chip at all (which is what Play uses), but the old, single note sound channel of the 48K Spectrum. You can test this channel by trying a few Beep commands as the manual instructs.*

The other answer is that the way in which the games use the sound chip is more sophisticated to the way Play works. It is possible to create some very effective sounds by employing machine-code witchcraft. But the way in which the sound chip is connected up to the rest of the Spectrum circuitry means that some of these tricks merely result in a strangled squark instead of the mean machine music intended. The computer can also develop subtle faults which have the same effect — trying your games on somebody else's machine would tell you which audio misfortune has befallen you.

(but Dr. Rupe has the answer)

(but Dr. Rupe has the answer)

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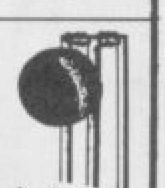
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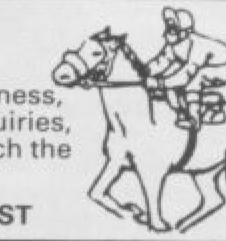
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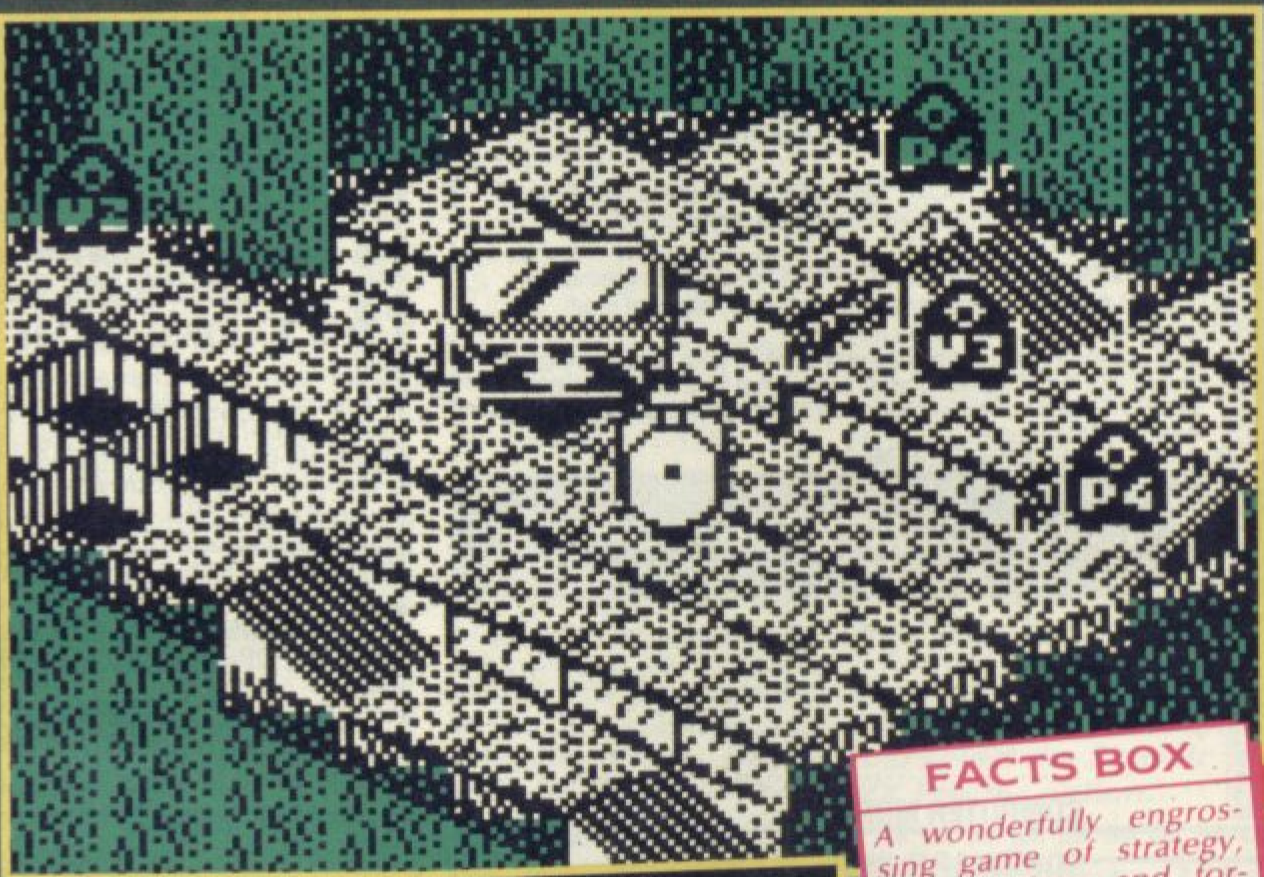
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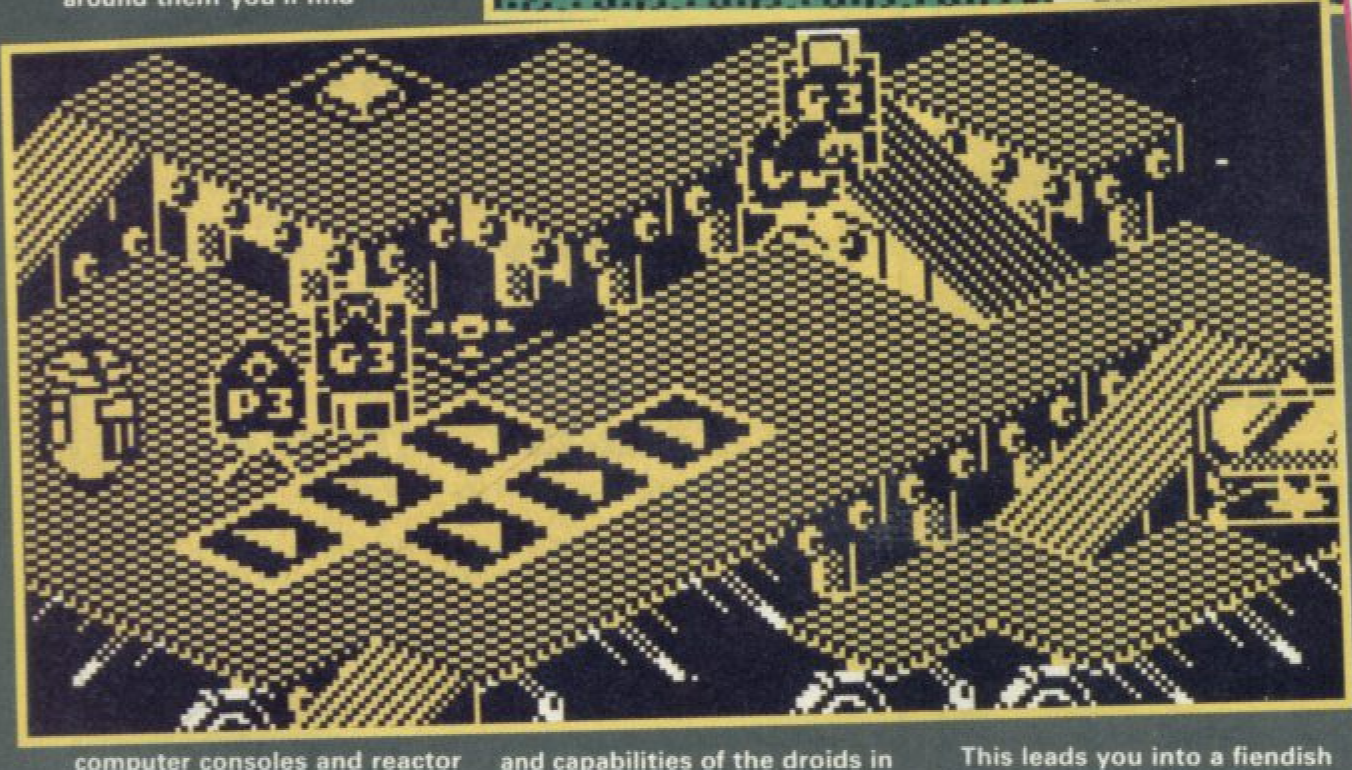
MAGNETR

Call it a sequel and you'll end up flat on your batteries. Magnetron is a follow-up-in-concept to Quazatron, Steve Turner's last game, which itself owed a lot to Andrew Braybrook's Paradroid. But Magnetron is different enough to take it into a different class, packing so much into 48K that the Spectrum bulges at the seams.

Droid hero KLP2 is transported to a series of eight space platforms, under instructions to shut down their reactors. If you're at all surprised to hear that this task is complicated by hordes of heavily-armed guardian robots, then you obviously haven't been paying attention to the 'manual of standard computer games plots'.

Fortunately the game is twelve thousand times better than it sounds. The graphics routines have been completely re-written, the screens now flipping instead of scrolling, which means that the movement of the droids is even smoother. The backgrounds usually feature two colours, which contributes to the 3-D effects. Each of the eight levels consists of sixteen screens arranged in a four-by-four grid. The slopes, causeways and ramps are similar to those of Quazatron, but scattered around them you'll find computer consoles and reactor entrances which are your main objectives.





Reaching a computer console and logging on (just by standing still and pressing the fire button) will give you access to three screens of information. The first tells you the status of the reactors on the current level, the second lists the types and capabilities of the droids in the area, and the third (which you can only access if your droid classification is high enough) describes the weapons available to you. Your first task, then, is to pick out a weak droid, then return to the game screen, identify the droid by its code number, and Grapple it (Oo-er!)

This leads you into a fiendish sub-game in which you must solve a sort of sliding block puzzle by nudging three rows of symbols into the right place. Big problem; you only have ten seconds to do it before your target explodes. If you succeed, the target droid becomes a back-up, so that if you die you are transferred into its chassis.

FACTS BOX

A wonderfully engrossing game of strategy, fast reactions and forward planning

MAGNETRON
Label: Firebird
Author: Steve Turner
Price: £7.95
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Chris Jenkins

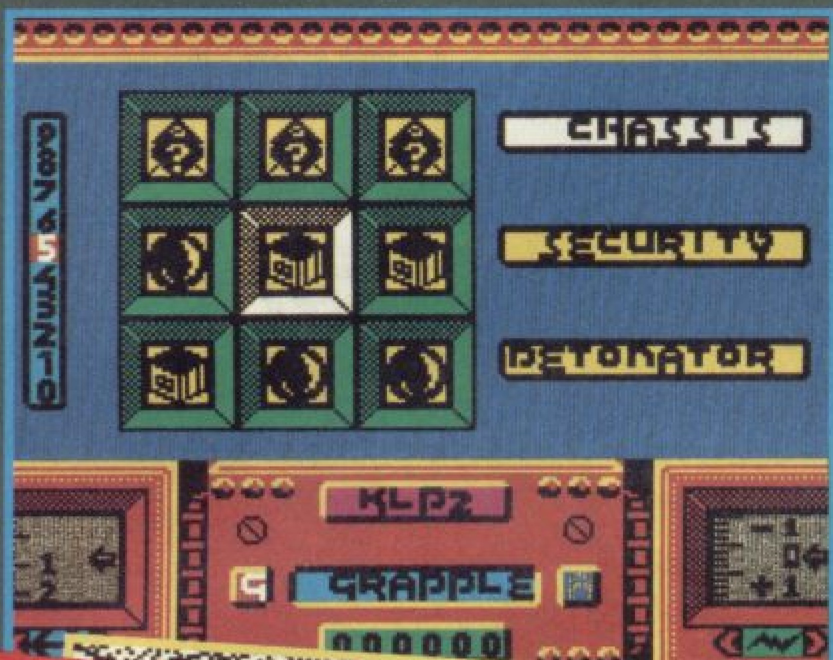
★★★★★★★★★★ 10



RON

Always have a back-up ready, you never know when a sudden fall or a vicious cross-fire will drain your energy and destroy your current droid. If you don't want to take over the new droid – if, for instance, its weapons are weaker than your own – you can just take its energy and disarm its bomb.

Roaming the levels blasting or grappling droids is all very







well, but your aim is to reach the reactor screens. Here you have another sub-game, ridiculously simple really, in which you have to balance the positive and negative isotopes in the reactor in order either to shut it off, or to overload it. The catch is that the left-over isotopes are carried away with you, and then affect your performance. Their weight slows you down, and their magnetic charge (so that's why it's called Magnetron...) causes you to be attracted to or repelled from certain areas of the floorway (so that's why it's called Magnetron)!

The trick, then, is to take over the correct droid to give you the weaponry needed to defeat the guardians, pick up the right isotopes to allow you to complete each level without being pushed off ledges by magnetic forces, and to shut down all the reactors and make your way through the darkened level to the transport pad to the next level.

There are some great weapons available, including a flying disc, a boomerang bomb (watch out for the returning flight!), a bouncing bomb and a round-the-corner shot. You'll find that powerful, slow weapons are pretty useless against weak but fast droids, so choose carefully if you don't want to be battered to bits by gangs of softies.

Quazatron was an SU Classic, so Magnetron must be a Classic Plus. The gameplay of the main section is more exciting than most programmers could come up with, but both the addition of the sub-games and the complexities of the strategy necessary to complete all the levels make it even zippier. It will be great to see Steve Turner coming up with a brand new game concept, but for the moment Magnetron will keep you happy whether you like a good think, a good blast or a good plot■

STEVE TURNER'S MAGNETRON PLAYING TIPS

- As soon as you start, find a weak robot using the computer console, and transfer into it. Then you'll have a back-up chassis in case you die. Do the same when you complete a level, or when you've travelled a long distance.
- Make a map showing which reactors you've shut down. The console will give you this information, but not the locations.
- Get hold of a strong droid with good weapons as soon as possible. You can go into 'grapple mode' before moving to a new screen. Since you can't go into 'grapple mode' when you're under attack, it's a good idea to do it before you move on to a screen with a lot of droids.
- Carry the smallest number of isotopes with the lowest overall charge that you can. On the later levels, you'll need to match your charge to that of the floor tiles, and you can't afford to be carrying a lot of weight over steep slopes ■



PROGRAMMERS

STEVE TURNER Founder member of Graftgold, who recently move from programming exclusively for Hewson to Telecomsoft. SOFTOGRAPHY: **3D Space Wares** (*Hewson*, 1983); **3D Seidab Attack** (*Hewson*, 1983); **Lunattack** (*Hewson*, 1984); **Avalon** (*Hewson*, 1984); **Dragontorc** (*Hewson*, 1984); **Quazatron** (*Hewson*, 1986); **Ranarama** (*Hewson*, 1987).

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TH



Greetings mortals. It is I, the Sorceress. The one you knew as Gordo has given me the sacred duty of looking after this, his most revered column.

Gordo has set forth on one of his great journeys. He had been yearning for the days when he'd travelled the globe in search of adventure. Gordo was no longer happy merely to relate tales of his youth, he wanted to live again, to go on a quest! He told me of his inner turmoil, and how he had grown fat, soft and slightly wobbly with lack of action. "Any Quests want doing?" he said.

I told him a tale I'd heard about a two-headed yeti that was causing havoc in the mountain regions of Chiberia and suggested he saddle up his trusty steed, dust off his sword, fill his lamp, throw away his flagon of ale and rejoin the lusty world of true adventurers.

His bloodshot eyes lit up and he stood up straight, vainly trying to hold his potbelly in check. "I'll do it," he said, "but who will take over for me? The Bear will be furious if the column is not maintained! I don't suppose. . . ." The words were left unsaid but the meaning was clear.

Despite a first class honours degree in Sorcery I had found few really long-term career openings. So I gladly accepted Gordo's offer and thus here I am, ready to wave my wand of enlightenment and guide you through the treacherous paths of the adventure world.

A recent peek into the crystal ball has revealed lots of distraught adventurers playing **Rigel's Revenge,** so here's a bit of help for you. You begin Part One in the dark so **Get Goggles, Wear Goggles** and you'll be able to see. I spent ages typing 'get glasses', 'find glasses' before I realised that 'goggles' was the word I was looking for. I would have thought 'glasses' to be a reasonable synonym for 'goggles' but then I'm just a Sorceress not an adventure game designer.

If you get lost in the desert then **Follow Tracks** will get you out, but don't forget the bone! You will have to move the bed a couple of times before you can get the weapon that's hidden underneath.

If you find yourself trussed up in a net then forget it! This is not a problem but 'end of game'.

From the edge of No-Man's land go east three times then move three times in each of the eight possile directions then proceed east three times, southeast then east should find you outside a hut. . .

There's a terrific pong in here! Hang on a minute while I try to locate the source. . . got it! What on earth would Gordo want with a tub of rancid yak's butter! I'm afraid it will have to go, a quick wave of the wand should change it to a tub of sweet smelling roses. Ah! That's better.

Waterday 6th Juniper
Institute of Gnome Economics

I do gnot gnormally keep a diary, b
me as a leaving present, and it w
waste it.

This will be the only entry that I s
Institute. Tomorrow I shall catch th r
Little Moaning and will be home at m the
day after.



Even with a crystal ball and some mindreading techniques I can't probe the mind of every adventurer who has the good taste to buy Sinclair User so you're going to have to write to me and tell me what you are playing, where you are stuck, what you have solved, any hints you'd like to pass to other adventurers, and anything else that comes to mind.

The Pawn

Can't stop the Guru laughing at you? It seems for some unknown reason, he finds your wristband hilarious. If you remove your shirt and cover the wristband with it he will be more amenable. To my mind, having a shirt dangling from your wrist is a lot funnier than wearing an ordinary wrist band. But then Guru's always have a weird sense of humour.

The key from your pocket will open the shed door. In the shed you will find a rake and hoe. To lever the boulder you need to tie the rake and hoe together with your shirt. When that's done don't forget to get dressed again 'cos it's cold in them thar hills. Fill the bowl with snow and return it to the Guru.

When you meet Kronos say 'hello' to him, take the note he offers and ask him about the wristband. Take the chest which you must give to the Adventurer to kill him. The light is hidden in a tree stump. You must mix the colours to get white – this is your light.

Play

It Again Sam If you open the drawer in the first location don't forget to close it again or you may have trouble leaving the room. When you find yourself strapped in a chair you must be carrying the switchblade and input 'Cut Bonds Blade' exactly as shown here.

Bulbo

And The Lizard King. Many donkey problems it seems. To get the donkey to follow you examine it and find a rope. The donkey is attached to the other end of this rope, so whither thou goest it will follow.

HE SORCERESS

Stuck in a dungeon or helpless at the hands of fetid trolls? Write to The Sorceress SU Priory Ct, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.



I had a visitor today, Ingrid Bottomlow in person. What a drag! I hoped she wouldn't stay for too long, since she is a dull person and goes on and on. She did but I did get some useful information to pass on to fellow adventurers – not easy this job.

So, to get you started on **Gnome Ranger.** First knock on the door of the Centaur's shop. Once inside try examining everything until the Centaur asks you to deliver a letter for him. Take the letter and, when asked by the Centaur, take the shovel.

When you see the eagle above you, **Examine Eagle** and it will carry you off to its nest. Be firm with the chicks and the eagle will reward you. The eagle will also help you release the dog in the witch's garden so that you don't have to enter. Once the dog is released then follow it to receive another reward.

When you get stuck in the mist, you can summon one of your new found friends and follow them to get out. . .

I've just found a note from Gordo. He says he didn't have enough room on his horse for his tub of rancid yak's butter. Will I please forward it on to him!

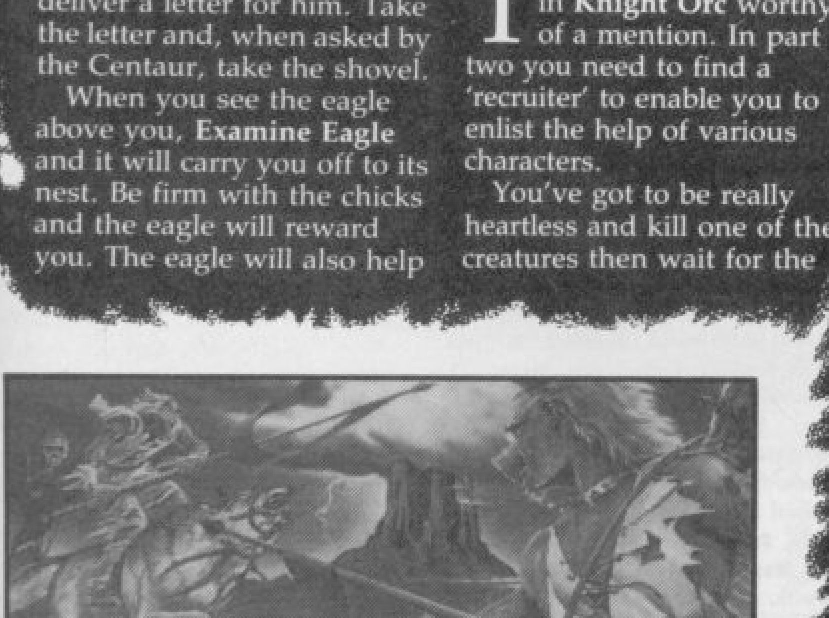
There are a few puzzles in **Knight Orc** worthy of a mention. In part two you need to find a 'recruiter' to enable you to enlist the help of various characters.

You've got to be really heartless and kill one of the creatures then wait for the Valkyrie to come. Give the card to the Valkyrie and she will take away the body. Cast **Death** on yourself and she'll come back and take you to her location. You need to cast **Glow** on an item of clothing for a light. Retrieve your card and insert it in the door. So through the door and you'll find a peculiar contraption – this is your recruiter.

To deal with the troll you need to gather up as many silver objects as you can find and go to the bridge. Give one piece of silver to the troll and cross the bridge. Drop a piece of silver and then move one location away and drop another piece of silver. The troll will follow you and pick them up. When you are about five locations away then drop all the silver you still have and run to the bridge. Enter the door and you'll find the troll's wallet. You will now be able to recruit the troll.

Cast **Fly** on the statue to read the inscription on the base and you'll have another spell to add to your collection.

You don't need to use all the spells but you must find them all for maximum points.



Take that gun away from your head! That's the way, now put it down – gently!! Before you do anything rash have a look at the quick hints in this bit, you just might find the answer you've been searching for.

WITTS END

THE HOBBIT – stuck in the Goblin's Dungeon? Ask somebody else!!

KARYSSIA - Swallow the pearl to stop the guards getting it.

OPERATION BERLIN – When called on the PA system, go to the Information Desk and show passport. (The passport is in your wallet).

CRYSTAL OF CHANTIE – You need the long stick to push the bird's nest. You need the grass and flint to make a fire, and you can only make one at the Explorer's Retreat.

DAVEY JONES LOCKER – Keep throwing the hook on the ship's deck until you have got a bicycle, a sock, an electric eel and a diving suit. Say 'William the Conqueror' to the old man on the island. When in the dinghy, take the squid and wait until you are sucked into the whirlpool. Give the squid to the Mermaid (sick squid ... groan!!).

SERF'S TALE – To cross the bridge, throw the sandwiches when asked by the Troll.

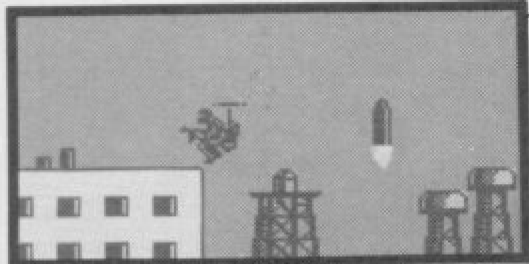
LIFE TERM – There are explosives and detonators in number one hold, but you can only carry one at a time. So take the explosive to the safe and PLACE EXPOSIVE, then go for the detonator. Bring it back to the crew's quarters and PLACE DETONATOR. Then GLUE DETONATOR (with the glue you found earlier).

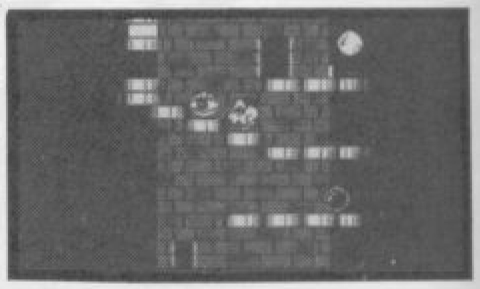
DODGY GEEZERS Part one – By the pet shop EXAMINE SHOP to get Doggi-snooze pills. In the Library when asked if you want some help say YES and when asked what you require information about say SEWERS. READ BOOK tells you that the access to the sewers is south at Terminal Street. Take Tricks, Soapy and Mr. Video into part two with you.

DODGY GEEZERS Part two – Password VERT ETEP. The pills you found in part one are used to send the two Doberman dogs byebyes. In the yard managers hut LIFT CARPET and LIFT COVER then go DOWN and LIGHT MATCH. When Soapy and Mr. Video ask if you want them to load the gold say NO and then COLLECT NAILS.

COMPETITION WINNERS

SINCLAIR user





ACTION FORCE

Ten-shun!

Way back in December we offered you the chance to command your very own army. And before anyone accuses us of warmongering and Empire-building, the competition was all in a good cause. The people at Virgin thoughtfully supplied us with a game by the name of Action Force, and a complete set of small soldiers, fighter jets, the odd wolf and one or two all purpose jeeps and appropriate drivers.

Anyway, the answers to the questions were as follows, and anyone who got them wrong didn't stand a cat in hell's chance of getting a prize. Action Force toys are made out of (a) plastic, sensible people would rather trust National Security to (b) the SAS and (c) we gave Action Force 9 stars in our review. The first two people out of the knapsack were:

B Mosquera, Heywood, Lancs. Lee Wilson, BP Auckland, Co Durham

and they take away a jet, a jeep, three Action Force figures, a wolf, a copy of the game and a poster apiece.

The next ten people:

Steven Bayliss, Erdington, Birmingham. Alan Diss, Rubery, Birmingham. Stuart Spice, Foxton, Cambridgeshire. Neil A Coutts, Dyce, Aberdeen. J Ridehalgh, Markfield, Leics. Stephen White, Leicester. Andrew Roper, Basingstoke Hants. J D Doggett, Potters Bar, Herts. Jeremy Gregg, Sutton Trust Estate, Hull. Andrew Bostock, Laughton, Sheffield

all have a copy of the game, a little man and another pet wolf and a poster. Not to mention the next thirty people who march off with a copy of the game and a poster:

Philip Price, Birmingham. Paul Hutchinson, Thornaby, Cleveland. I Swarbrink, Cotehill, Carlisle. Marc Cole, Charfield, Glos. Jim Docherty, Kilwinning, Ayrshire. James Greaves, Swaffham, Norfolk. A Seaton, Ashford, Kent. Jason Buttery, Winyates East, Redditch. Charles Wood, Bridlington. David Hunter, Whitehaven, Cumbria. Neil Lowrie, Hemel Hempstead, Herts. Robin Hazelton, Glengormley, N Ireland. Adrian Adams, Wyke, Bradford. Andrew Farrell, Farnforth, Bolton. Gareth Clarke, Ascot, Berks. Scott Bovey, Darson, Torquay. Lynne Bebbington, Helsby, Warrington. P Armstrong, Tooting, London. Alan Campbell, Cheltenham, Gloucs. James Stanley, Porth, Mid Glamorgan. Paul Hunter, Morcambe, Lancashire. Mark Bishop, Poole, Dorset. J K Marston, Ferndown, Dorset. Karl Barrow, Hemsworth, W Yorks. John Germm, Hastings, Nr Nuneaton. James Kuick, West Malaysia. Jonathan Leach, Sidmouth, Devon. David Haffner, Batchley, Worcs. Lammé Olivier, Belgium. Chris Neiger, Wilmslow, Cheshire.

NEBULUS

Boing! (We're never ones to miss a cliche). Also in December we offered two hundred lucky people the chance to walk off with possibly the greatest fashion accessory of the century, the incredible plastic jumping frog!!!!

Obviously lots of you were captivated by the amazing brilliance of the frogs, and the tedious list of winners is printed below. The answers: 1 Frogs have four legs. 2 The French *do* eat bits of frogs, disgusting though it may seem. 3 The last Hewson cover game was Exolon. And these are the newly froggified people:

Alistair Campbell, Tain, Ross-shire. N Overy, Winchester, Hants. Robert Bartlett, Maidstone, Kent. Simon Needham, Chalfont St Peter, Bucks. Karl Barrow, Pontefract, West Yorks. David Hall, Stretford, Manchester 22. J K Marston, Wimborne, Dorset. Ian Doggett, Kirton, Ipswich. R Ordsun, Stoke on Trent, Staffs. Kevin Harvey, East Sussex. Alexander Fisher, Co Derry, N Ireland. Martin Foster, Nr Preston. Trevor Shipman, Skegness. Darren Creese, Tenby, Dyfed, Robert Leather, Lincoln. C J Down, Exeter, Devon. Michael Davies, Heywood, Lancs. R Lowe, Bath, Avon. Stephen Sprott, Johnstone, Renfrewshire. Matthew Clifford, Bulwell, Nottingham. Philip Vaughan, Kington, Herefordshire. Lee Juby, Wigston, Leicester. Helen Williamson, Elgin, Moray. Dominic Franks, Saltburn, Cleveland. Chris Hodgkins, Wednesbury, West Midlands. Sean Wilson, Co Derry, Northern Ireland. James Howarth, Bolton, Lancs. David Tutin, Chesham, Bucks. C M Griggs, Mablethorpe, Lincs. Andrew Green, Walsall, Staffs. Daniel Salter, Rotherham, South Yorks. S Keeling, Littleover, Derby. Christopher Lennard, Wrexham, Clwyd. Mark Olbertz, Caernavon, Gwynedd. Lasse Eldrup, Denmark. James Waddington, Bradford, W Yorks. J D Doggett, Potters Bar, Herts. Jim Docherty, Kilwinning, Ayrshire. A Bostock, Laughton, Sheffield. G Bartlett, Orchard Park Estate, Hull. Paul Clark, York. Steve Fowler, Torry, Aberdeen. Daniel Sullivan, Erith, Kent. Paul Gartland, South Glam. Iain Wiseman, Wootton Wawen. Cathy Welsh, Glasgow. Jeff Smith, W Midlands. B Mosquera, Heywood. Paul Wright, Deal, Kent. P Durhan, Alderley Edge, Cheshire. Bradley Howe, Harlington, Middlesex. Burak Altinisik, Turkey. Alan Diss, Rubery, Birmingham. Michael Stirling, West Ferry, Dundee. Daryl Nichols, Witham, Essex. Peter Walker, Scunthorpe. Andrew Green, Walsall, Staffs. S. Key, Nr Banbury, Oxon. Jonathan Sturman, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk. P & G Gibney, Carrickfergus, Co Antrim. R E Tepson, Sheffield. Jo Buscott, Derby. P J Reynolds, Sleaford, Lincs. Jonathan Lambert, Nr Oswestry, Shropshire. Christian Conroy, Morpeth, Northumberland. Andrew Dungey, Penryn, Cornwall. Darren Millin, County Down, N Ireland. A Thorpe, Seaham, County Durham. Adam James, Brunteg, Anglesey. Matthew Rose, Enfield, Middx. Begi Milne, East Lothian, Scotland. Ian Blake, Liskeard, Cornwall. Mark McGoran, Barrhead, Glasgow. Matthew Gregory, Syston, Leicester. Matthew Prince, Nr Chesterfield, Derbyshire. A G McMurdo, Ashington, Northumberland. Craig Lovelace, Diss, Norfolk. Simon Davidson, Loxley, Sheffield. C Stubbs, Staffs. Simon Wendt, Leighton Buzzard, Beds. Simon Slater, Co Durham. Lee Atkinson, Barnsley, S Yorks. Lawrence Hurley, Hoarwithy, Herefordshire. L Colman, Horfield, Bristol. Alex Delasalle, Poole, Dorset. Luke Blindell, Crookes, Sheffield. Mark Field, Orpington, Kent. A Elsegood, Broxtowe, Notts. Jon Rease, Bognor Regis, West Sussex. Andrew Bunton, Peterborough, Cambs. J Worwood, Willenhall, West Midlands. A Platts, Chesterfield. Keith Hancroft, Shafton, Barnsley. Hamilton Rice, Belfast, N Ireland. Nathan Furst, Tamworth, Staffs. Anthony Buckley, Stoke on Trent. Craig Thompson, Blamedie, Aberdeen. Lloyd Wood, Werrington, Peterborough. S A Williams, Denbigh, Clwyd. Daniel Bill, Stanwix, Carlisle. Patrick Chamberlain, Barnes, London. Duncan McKenzie, Bury, Lancs. Guy Robinson, Hucknall, Notts. Stephen Marsham, Rednal, Birmingham. Adam Lumber, Bristol. Nigel Parsons, Cardiff. Simon East, Reading, Berks. Garry Marr, Parson Cross, Sheffield. Jonathan Ridehalgh, Markfield, Leics. Richard Goodall, Newark, Notts. Stephen Clayburn, Barton le Clay, Bedfordshire. R Dowd, Kingsheath, Birmingham. Andrew Beasley, Hull. Anthony Refalo, Malta. O H Roberts, Puthin, Clwyd. J Leach, Sidmouth, Devon. Simon Ashe, Andover, Hampshire. Russell Chambers, Brinsworth, S Yorks. James Anthony, Matlock, Derbyshire. Chris Holmes, Milton, Cambridge. Neil A Coutts, Dyce, Aberdeen. Paul Hunter, Morecambe, Lancashire. Scott Sutherland, Glasgow, Scotland. Alan Campbell, Cheltenham, Gloucs. Bryan Else, Alvaston, Derby. Martin Kitts, Milton Keynes, Bucks. Stephen Pantry, Newport, Gwent.

ARCADE REVIEW

SUPER STUNT MAN



"Well, ah'm just a lonesome stuntman, a steel pin through ma skull. . ." or something like that. Fans of **The Fall Guy**, where the cars are the best actors, will love the opportunity to play at being Lee Majors in this latest arcade epic. The action is fast and furious, and the script is better than the real thing. **Super Stunt Man** is basically a car race game, but unlike most of this type of thing, you get the chance to blast your opponents off the course and smash into solid objects. Great!

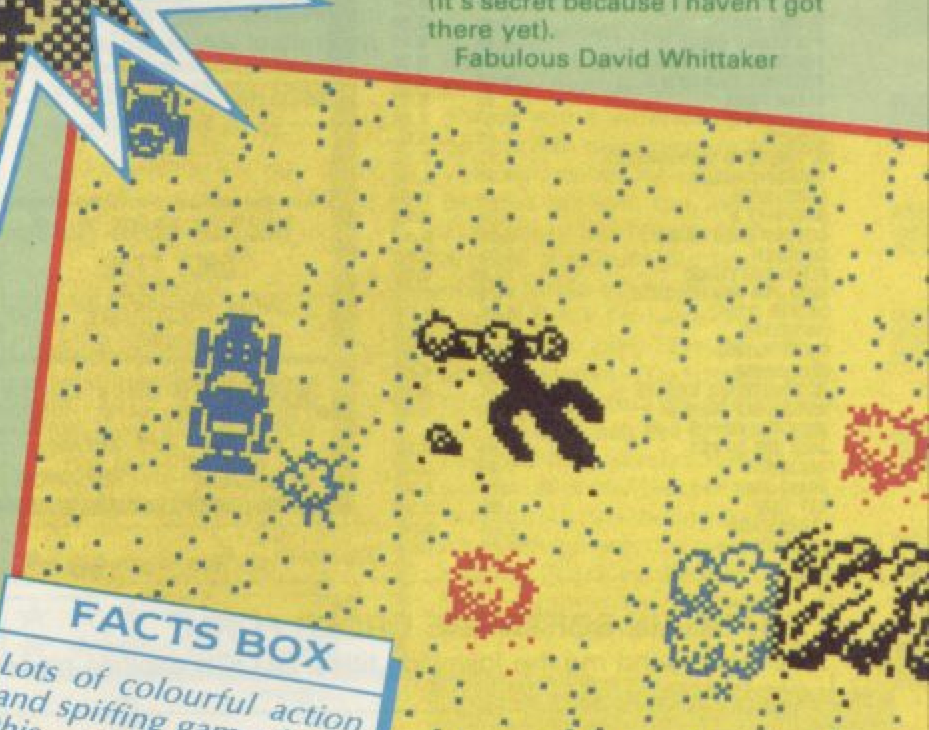
The left-hand two-thirds of the screen are taken up by the vertically-scrolling playing area. On the first level, this is a nicely-detailed desert scene, with boulders, canyons, cacti, and the odd bonfire which somehow manages to sustain itself in the wilderness. To the right of the screen are the score counter, timer, and a progressively more battered car indicating your damage level. Your aim is to complete each stage within the time limit, and in as spectacular a manner as possible. Dune buggies and racing cars speed past you firing bombs, and while you must dodge them to avoid being shunted into the fires, you get bonus points for ramming them or shooting them. You can even get a bonus for getting killed; run into a fire and you lose a life, but you get a 1000-point bonus for "great action". If you're close to completing a stage and you have plenty of time left, it might be worth it, because you get all your lives back at the start of the next stage.

The fires are pretty hard to avoid since some of them appear in bottlenecks and only the most skilful steering will avoid them. If you get stuck in a dead end, all you can do is reverse out, jam the wheel over and try to tack around the obstruction; you can't actually turn around.



Your car slips and slides across the sand, which makes the game more realistic if more difficult. Half way through each level is a special stunt which you must perform flawlessly; on level one, a ramp lets you jump over a huge canyon, if you're lined up properly for the takeoff. Otherwise, it's KERSPLATT! Don't forget to steer hard right as you land, or you'll plunge into a dead end. Complete level one and it's on to the boat chase, which isn't quite so exciting, if only because the backgrounds are so dull and there are fewer obstacles. Oddly, your damage meter still appears in the shape of a car. Caught you out there. Subsequent levels include a forest, a valley, a New York scene and a secret Grand Finale (it's secret because I haven't got there yet).

Fabulous David Whittaker music in three-part harmony, decent sound effects, nice graphics and imaginative gameplay make **Super Stuntman** another budget hit. How do the little beggars do it?■





FACTS BOX

Lots of colourful action and spiffing gameplay in this mucho exciting smash-'em-up

SUPER STUNTMAN
Label: Codemasters
Author: Peter Williamson
Price: £1.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Chris Jenkins

★★★★☆
★★★★☆ 8

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STRATEGY SIMULATION REVIEW





Rather than "capturing the speed, excitement and andrenalin-pumping danger of the world's greatest sports spectacle" as the box blurb would have you believe, Nigel Mansell's Grand Prix tries too hard to be authentic, and ends up being a bit pedestrian – more a case of "Nigel Mansell Drives Down to the Newagents for a Packet of Fags (on Sunday)".

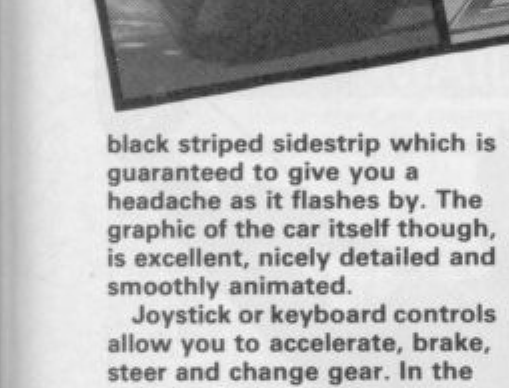
Like many other racing simulations, your car appears centre screen and the track swerves left and right. The backgrounds of hills and clouds are fairly naff, but more annoying is the yellow-and-black striped sidestrip which is guaranteed to give you a headache as it flashes by. The graphic of the car itself though, is excellent, nicely detailed and smoothly animated.

Joystick or keyboard controls allow you to accelerate, brake, steer and change gear. In the centre of the instrument display is your rev counter, which tells you when to change gear. Ignore it, and you'll burn out your gearbox and spin off the track.

Before racing you have to complete a qualifying lap to determine your position on the grid. As you zoom along an empty track, slowing into the curves and accelerating out, your performance statistics appear in the display at the bottom of the screen. This shows your speed, lap time, average speed, best lap time, distance to finish, fuel consumption and so on; all factors you'll have to bear in mind in the real race.

The main instrument display shows your oil temperature, pressure and turbo temperature. The turbo-boost is a pressure pump which increases your revs and acceleration; the problem is that it also increases your fuel consumption. While all these instruments might sound deadly dull, the fact is that you have to pay just as much attention to them as you do to the track. If you overheat, or otherwise push your car too far, it will lead to failures which put you out of the race. The skill of the game, then, is in getting the best from your racer without bashing it to bits.

While the practice lap sections are pretty uninteresting, once you get going the excitement mounts. Swerving around curves, bouncing off other cars and keeping an eye on several instruments at once proves pretty challenging. If your performance deteriorates for mechanical reasons, you can pull into the pits, where an automatic sequence changes your tyres and oil, wipes your windshield and probably gives you a free tumbler with every six gallons.



To help you out, scrolling messages from the pits inform you of your position, and the driver of the next car in front of you. There are sixteen courses to complete, each detailed on the accompanying leaflet. On the 48K version, the courses are loaded separately, on the 128K, all at once. The 128K version also features nice engine-revving and collision sound effects which make it much more enjoyable.

There's nothing wildly original about Nigel Mansell's Grand Prix, except little touches like the wing mirrors giving you a view of the opposition sneaking up behind you. A five-lap race (you have options for five, ten, twenty or even sixty lap races, each of around a minute per lap) just about holds your attention, but I don't think I'd have the patience to play through all sixteen tracks. The trouble with the game is that it's pretty cool technically, but for me doesn't capture that elusive feel of power and excitement which really makes a racing game stand out from the pack. Not exactly "back to the pits", then, but no real reason to crack open the champagne■

FACTS BOX

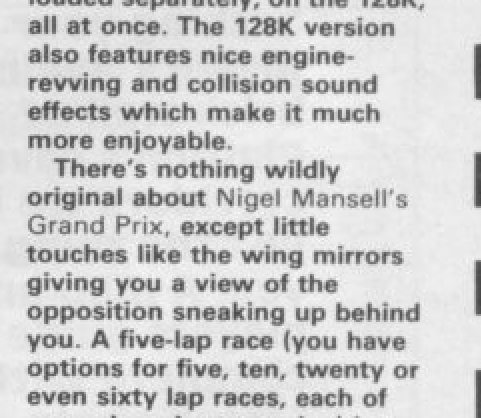
Technically superb but not especially exciting racing simulation

NIGEL MANSELL'S GRAND PRIX
Label: Martech
Authors: Looker Brothers
Price: £9.99
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

Reviewer: Chris Jenkins

★★★★☆
★★★☆☆ 7





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YETI

Swirly-swirl went the snow as it swirled around the intrepid explorer. As he looked out into the swirling depths from his nice cosy tent, he thought, 'Gosh, it must be freezing cold out there, in the swirling snow.'

Thus begins the epic novel that accompanies the game *Yeti* from Destiny Software. (That's a lie, isn't it –Ed. Well, yes, if you're going to be pedantic about this, it is a lie, but it was the best I could do for an opening sentence).

Yeti is the story of Carlton, whose intrepid search for the Lost Vale of Kharingol takes him up into the great mountain range of the Himalayas in Tibet. Why? Because that's where it was last seen.

Judging by the screen shot, the thing bears more than a passing resemblance to a famous game from Hewson. Well it does, doesn't it? Yes.



Again, the idea seems to be very much to blow up everything in sight and not to get mullered yourself. There's quite a lot of swirling snow (Honest, honest there is Graham) and some very nice sort of Tibetian idols, as you can see.

Streetdate: March
Price: Probably seven or eight something



CYBERNOID – EXOLON II?

What an earth could Hewson come up with now, we wondered? Surely they couldn't achieve greater heights of triumph than they had already? (OK, so I know it's smarmy, but you try writing previews month after month and coming up with decent intros every time. At least it's different).

Perhaps Andrew Hewson could swim the channel, run a marathon, try for President of the TUC? But no. In the time honoured tradition of software houses, Hewson decided that much the best thing to do would be to bring out yet another game.

This time it's called *Cybernoid – The Fighting Machine*, and it's being programmed by the highly esteemed, if unpronounceable Raphaele Cecco, he



FRIGHTMARE

We're all taking a particular interest in Cascade's up-and-coming sensory experience, *Frightmare*. It all takes place in the dark and grubby corners of the unconscious mind, and there are a couple of main objectives. First you've got to make sure you get through the night by going into different dreams, each advancing the clock by 6 minutes. Second, the idea is to get to as high a level of scarey-ness for your dream as possible.



So, in order to get the best score, you should ensure that your Frightometer, which indicates quite how horrifically petrified you are, gets to Nefarous Frightmare (the top rating) just as it's time to wake up, ensuring the maximum points.

It all sounds pretty conceptual and intricate, doesn't it? Well, how wrong you are – it's a platforms and ladders game. Each dream location is a room in the maze of runny-jumpy places, and you have to rush around, hammering the nasty dream elements with the objects that you find scattered around.

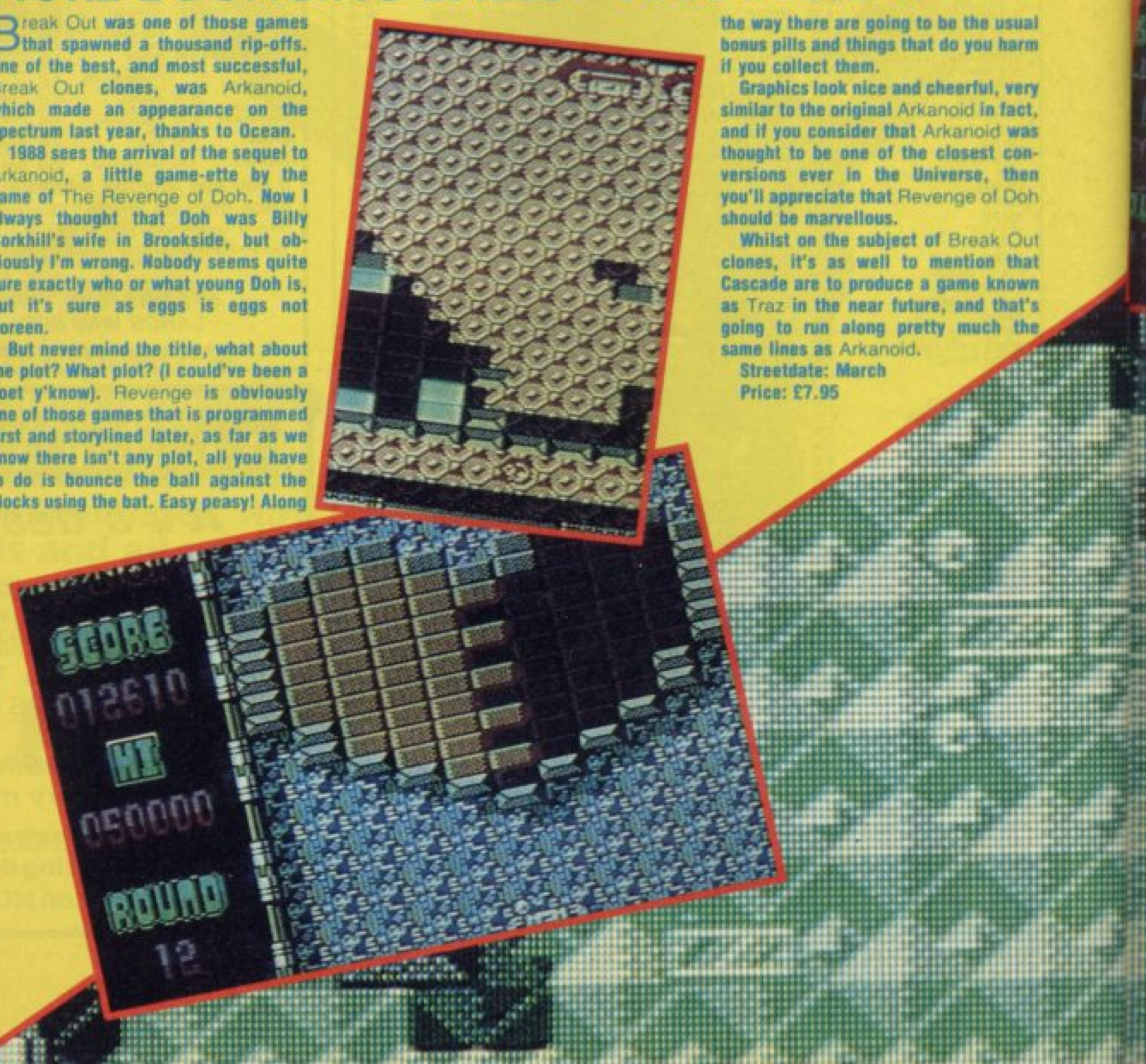
Streetdate: March.
Price: £8.95

MORE BOUNCING BALLS – ARKANOID II

Break Out was one of those games that spawned a thousand rip-offs. One of the best, and most successful, *Break Out* clones, was *Arkanoid*, which made an appearance on the Spectrum last year, thanks to Ocean.

1988 sees the arrival of the sequel to *Arkanoid*, a little game-ette by the name of *The Revenge of Doh*. Now I always thought that Doh was Billy Corkhill's wife in Brookside, but obviously I'm wrong. Nobody seems quite sure exactly who or what young Doh is, but it's sure as eggs is eggs not Doreen.

But never mind the title, what about the plot? What plot? (I could've been a poet y'know). *Revenge* is obviously one of those games that is programmed first and storylined later, as far as we know there isn't any plot, all you have to do is bounce the ball against the blocks using the bat. Easy peasy! Along the way there are going to be the usual bonus pills and things that do you harm if you collect them.



Graphics look nice and cheerful, very similar to the original *Arkanoid* in fact, and if you consider that *Arkanoid* was thought to be one of the closest conversions ever in the Universe, then you'll appreciate that *Revenge of Doh* should be marvellous.

Whilst on the subject of *Break Out* clones, it's as well to mention that Cascade are to produce a game known as *Traz* in the near future, and that's going to run along pretty much the same lines as *Arkanoid*.

Streetdate: March
Price: £7.95



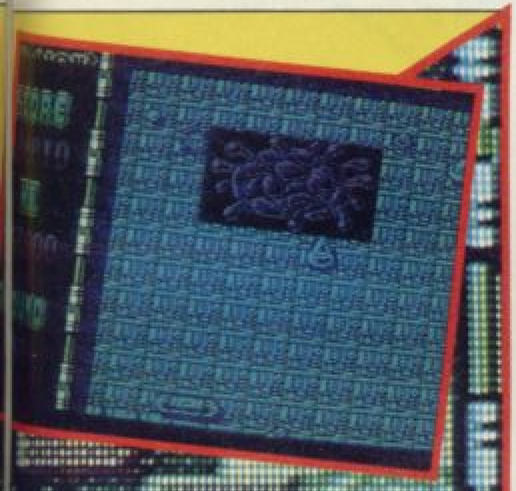


of Exolon fame.
Taking that fact into consideration,

it should come as no surprise to anybody called Eric who looks like a cauliflower that Cybernoid is one of those blasty-blasty-shoot everything in sight sort of games. The storyline burbles on about nasty space pirates who are stealing everything of any worth in the galaxy, who are simply in need of a good shooting to teach them a lesson. And that's where you come in. Pulling on extra bits of armour to your large and powerful ship and blasting away to your heart's content. Weapons, we're told, will include various bits and pieces like drop bombs and laser bouncers, and they're the sort of things that are well known for being good for a laugh.

The pictures look wonderfully butch and colourful, and we've got high hopes, all together, "High hopes, he's got hiiiiigh hopes . . ."

Streetdate: March.
Price: £7.95



CHAMPION SPRINT

Hands up all those who remember November last year? Yes? Good. In that case you'll recall perfectly Super Sprint from Activision, and I won't need to tell you anything about the sequel which is extraordinarily similar.

Streetdate: February.
Price: £9.99

(What sort of preview do you call this? Get back in there and explain what it's all about, or you're for the Big Chair With the Spike in the Seat – Ed.)

Anyway, as I was saying, Championship Sprint is the follow-up to Activision's Super Sprint which came out



last year. You and a friend race around at breakneck speed and whoever wins is the, um winner.

We, it obviously sold like hot bananas because Activision think that they can get away with releasing another – virtually identical – game with the added feature of being able to construct your own tracks. You can put the bends where you like and the jumps, short cuts and gates in equally optional positions.

Streetdate: February.
Price: £9.99





19 ON TAPE

Well now that you're well on your way to recovery after being thoroughly gob-smacked by the amazing freebie-tape on the front cover, here's a snip-ette of info about side B, the fabby demo of 19 from Cascade.

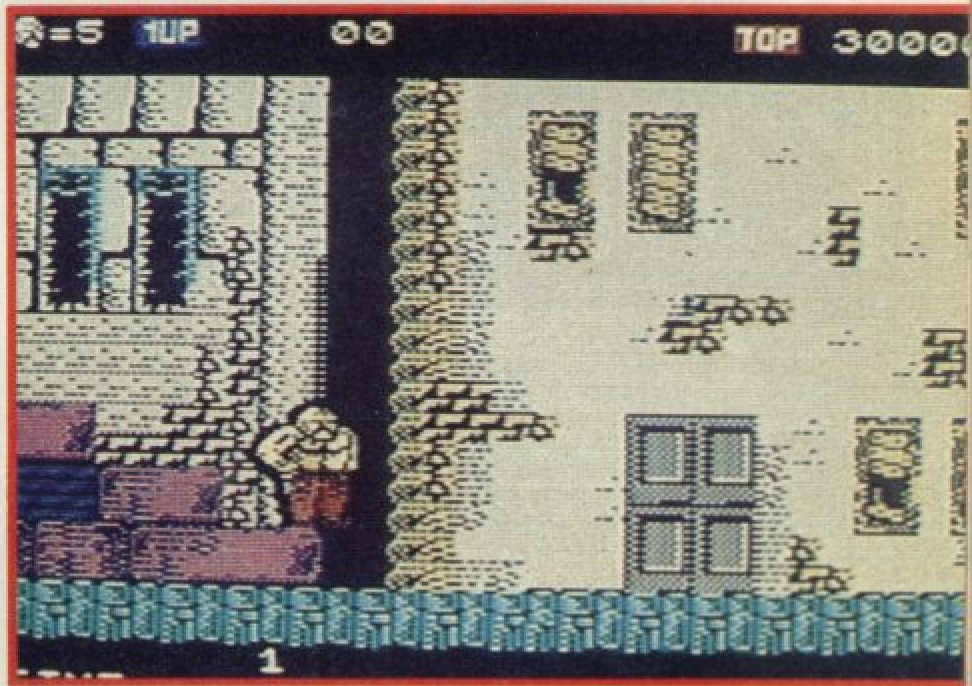
You had a preview of the game last month, but here again we give that extra little bit of information that makes the whole thing worth while.

The demo shows part of the game, those of you who've been paying attention during the past couple of months will remember that there are plans to make 19 a three part game. The shooting range is just one of the most important part of a young rookie's training, and so we give you the opportunity to get on with that training. Here's a screen shot anyway, had a good look at it? Good, well get to your computer and start loading the demo of 19 and then try telling us we never give you anything matey boy.

Streetdate: March.
Price: Probably £8.95



KARNOV BEATS SMIRNOV



Talk about being typecast. If I have to play a fire-breathing Russian *one more time...*

Electric Dreams' Karnov is another coin-op conversion from Data East, and personally I don't remember it in the slightest. Anyway, being a kind of bohemian forward-thinking sort of Russian, you realise that all this Communism business is a bit of a fraud, and you could be incredibly rich and retire to Malibu if only you could get your hands on the lost treasure of Babylon.

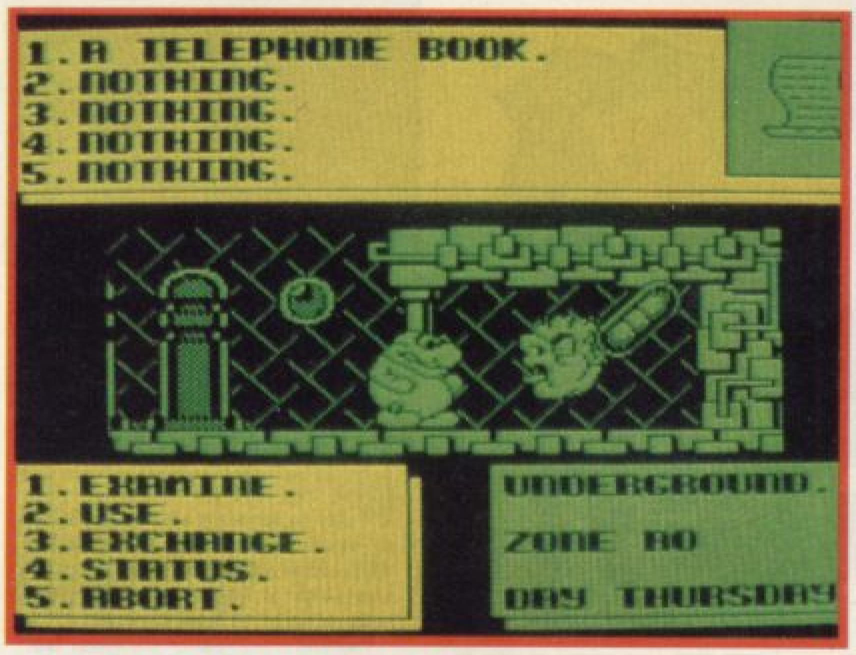
And you won't be surprised to learn that the way to find the treasure is to explore a scrolling jumping, running firing maze of nasty places (9 levels, stat fans).

As you can see, Karnov is extremely colourful, and your character has a thick black outline. Yup. It's the Dark Sceptre school of attribute handling. No. Don't scoff, we reckon it's all rather fab.

Streetdate: March
Price: £9.99



PREVIEW 3



TROLL

This first offering from Outlaw is called Troll, and Outlaw promise that it will be a 'slice of pure arcade mayhem'. Well Id've thought that that was a pretty good way to start, here comes the preview.

You find youself trapped in the nether regions (I'm sure that should read 'nether world' – Ed) of Narc, surrounded by hordes of pesky goblins whose only desire is to get *you* buster.

Now, you're lucky enough to have



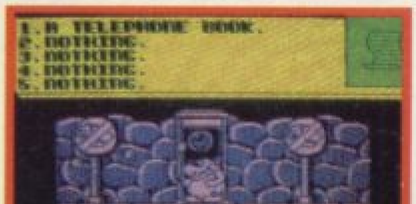
your own supply of escape holes, and you can drop them wherever you like, thus enabling you to get away from the goblins. And if you find you're having too much trouble getting away, then you can easily jump on to the ceiling and carry on the game upside down. Oh, and watch out for The Pit.

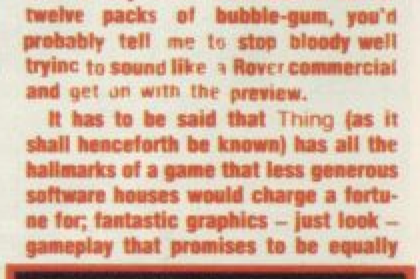
Streetdate: March
Price: To be confirmed

A DAY IN THE LIFE

If I were to tell you that A Day in the Life of Thing was just about to come out from the newly formed Very expensive Soft and it had been years and years in development, you'd probably nod in agreement. If I were to say that it was using incredible new graphical techniques developed in an American mathematical institute, you'd probably be intrigued but not entirely surprised, but if I were to tell you that you will be able to buy it for less than a set of twelve packs of bubble-gum, you'd probably tell me to stop bloody well trying to sound like a Rover commercial and get on with the preview.

It has to be said that Thing (as it shall henceforth be known) has all the hallmarks of a game that less generous software houses would charge a fortune for; fantastic graphics – just look – gameplay that promises to be equally





fab, and a presentation that looks so slick you could grease your widgets for a fortnight.

Just look at the screenshots again. Incredible aren't they? It's kind of based on a similar principle as Mastertronic's Knight Tyme games, only it looks a hundred times better. As you walk around the scrolling landscape, teleporting across larger distances and strolling across shorter ones, fighting off the Dingalingers and collecting objects.

Once you've collected a pair of compatible objects – the video recorder and a blank tape, for example – you've got to find the right place you "use" them. Having completed ten tasks like this, it's time to go off in search of the Big Dingalinger Himself.

The program works by menus in the Knight-Tyme style and as it was written by Colin Swinbourne, who produced Deviants and Joe Blade, it looks like turning out a treat.

Streetdate: March
Price: £1.99

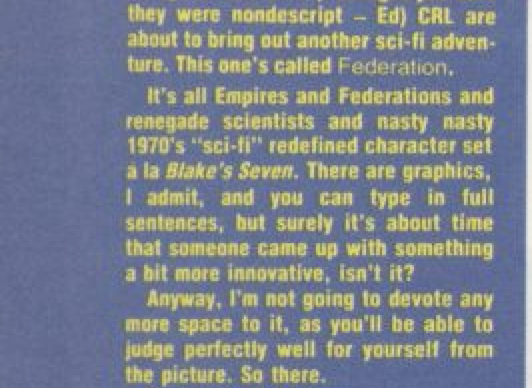
FEDERATION

As if adventurers hadn't had enough of walking down nondescript metal octagonal corridors (I thought you said they were nondescript – Ed) CRL are about to bring out another sci-fi adventure. This one's called Federation.

It's all Empires and Federations and renegade scientists and nasty nasty 1970's "sci-fi" redefined character set a la *Blake's Seven*. There are graphics, I admit, and you can type in full sentences, but surely it's about time that someone came up with something a bit more innovative, isn't it?

Anyway, I'm not going to devote any more space to it, as you'll be able to judge perfectly well for yourself from the picture. So there.

Streetdate: February
Price: £8.95



WE ARE DE CORPORATION

The Corporation could well be the title of a new television series starring Hale and Pace AKA *Ron and Ron*. A tale of two lovable cockney scallywag criminals and a Fiat bubble car. What a great game eh? Racing around town, kneecapping people and giving bunches of flowers to your dear old mum, Vi.

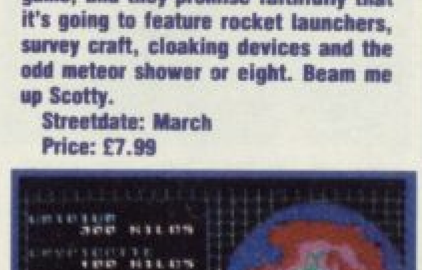
Well pull yourself together, because The Corporation from Activision ain't going to be anything like that at all.

The year is 3026AD, and the world has become such a place that countries no longer exist, and the whole caboodle has been divided into two extremely large Corporations. In order to survive and prosper, you must pledge yourself to one of these corporations (pick a Corporation, any Corporation, it doesn't matter which) and effectively flog your guts out for it.

So long as you flog your aforementioned guts out, you're going to be OK, but any sort of failure leads straight to the galactic dole. So as the Commander of a deep space robotic mining team, you've got to collect as much of the precious Minorthian Crystal as you can, whilst preventing the rival Corporation from getting their dirty paws on any. Oh, and there's the added complication that the asteroid you're digging about on is about to destruct itself in a distinctly unfriendly way. So you've got to get a move on.

Activision is touting this particular goodie as being an action and strategy game, and they promise faithfully that it's going to feature rocket launchers, survey craft, cloaking devices and the odd meteor shower or eight. Beam me up Scotty.

Streetdate: March
Price: £7.99

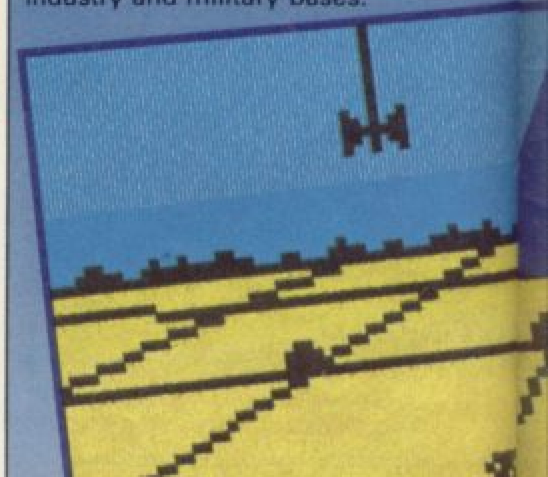


STOP PRESS
REVIEW
STOP PRESS

Back with a bang, a whizz and a kerpow, Digital Integration's **ATF** is a stunning bit of work that'll have you pinned to your seat.

Forget those simulations where you have to spend three hours reading the manual and a day-and-a-half working out how to take off; **ATF** is non-stop action, you may not find it realistic but golly it's fun.

You are caught up in a bitter war between two superpowers. In order to defeat the evil baddies, you must use your **Advanced Tactical Fighter** to preserve your side's advantage in fighting forces, communications, industry and military bases.



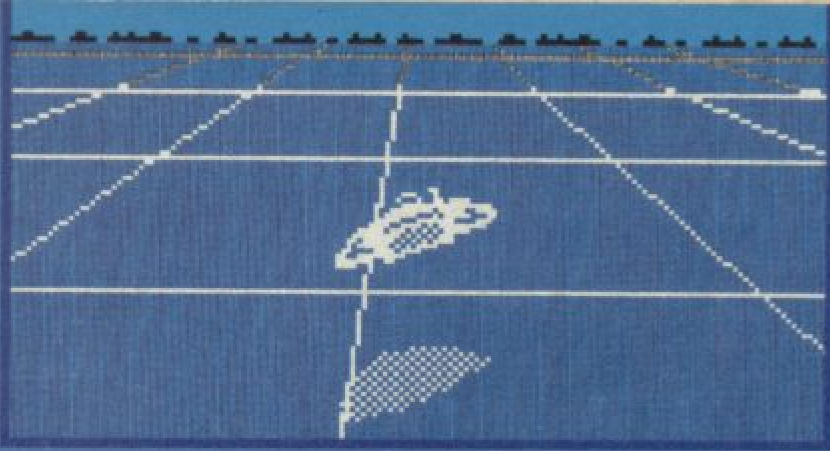
FACTS BOX

Rivetting shoot-'em-up with some aspects of a simulation; great graphics and absorbing gameplay

ATF
Label: Digital Integration
Authors: Ian Beynon
Price: £8.95 cassette, £12.95 disc
Memory: 48K/128K
Joystick: various

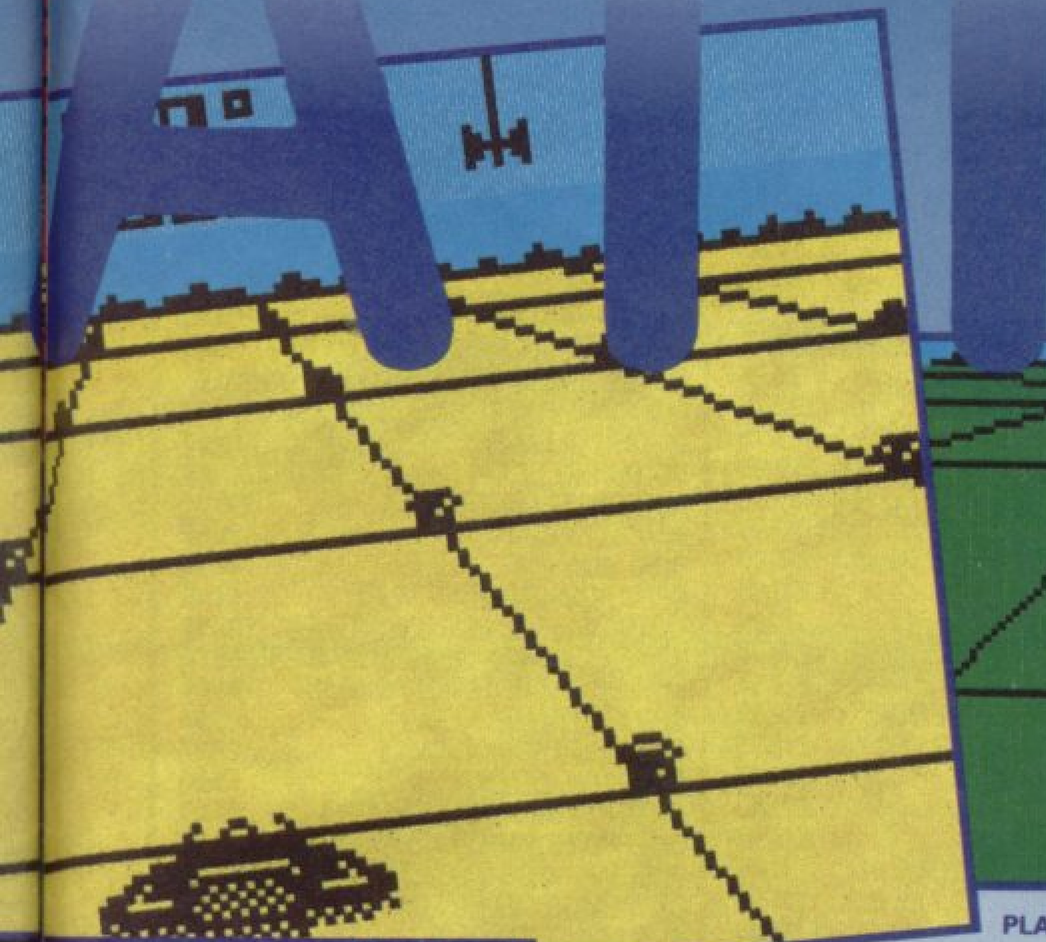
Reviewer: Chris Jenkins

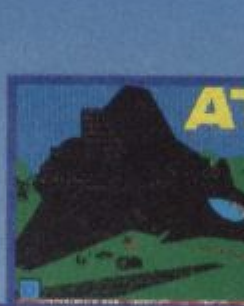
★★★★★ ★★★★★ 10

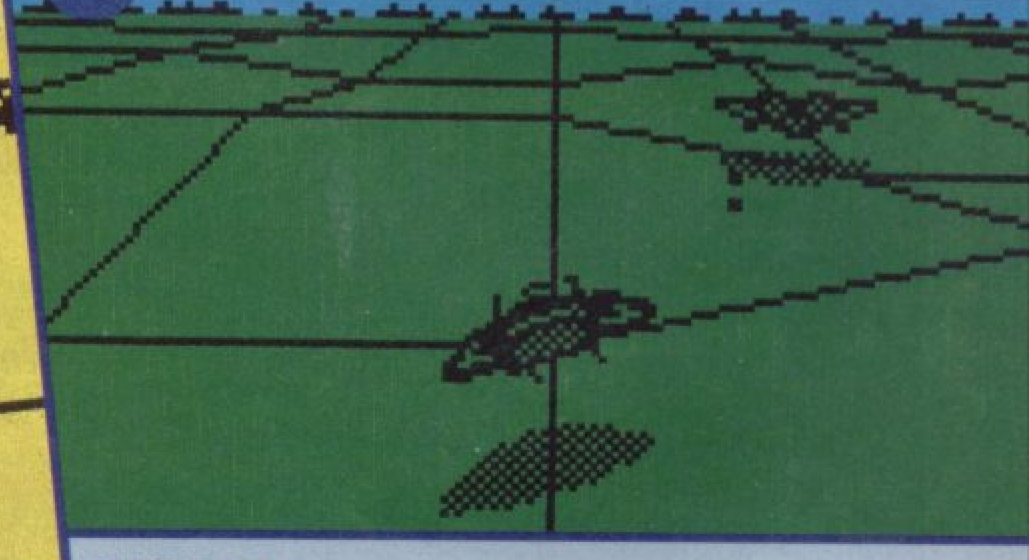


STRATEGY SIMULATION REVIEW

ATF









Each mission begins with a world map showing the distribution of forces. This is programmed into your plane's on-board computer for later reference. The War Situation report shows you the latest gains and losses in each of the categories; on this basis you decide the targets for your next mission. The next step is to arm your aircraft with cannon shells, guided missiles, smart missiles and fuel. You can shoose your own combinations within the **ATF**'s weight limit.

The main display is a really zippy contoured-perspective map through which your plane zooms convincingly. Taking off is easy; just get up to full power and pull back on the stick. You can then fly manually, or engage the terrain-following mode by which the plane hugs the contours of the ground. The danger here is that if you fly too fast you might smack into the odd mountain.

If you want to get rid of the contour markings you can have a more realistic plain display with waves on the sea; personally, I preferred the contours because they look more high-tech, although without them the game runs even faster.

So it's AKKA-AKKA-AKKA as the enemy fighters zoom up behind you, and you blow them to bits with your cannon. You home in on targets using your radar display computer read-out and compass; missiles blast through the air; surface-to-air missiles shoot up your behind; and once you've done a bit of mega-destruction you head for the nearest friendly base and press L for an automatic landing. Then you get another war report, refuel and re-arm, and it's back into the wild blue yonder again.

In case it isn't obvious, I'm wildly enthusiastic about **ATF**; though it includes many of the aspects of a flight simulator, such as fuel gauges, undercarriage, weapons selection and mission profiles, it's really a very open-ended and hugely enjoyable shoot-'em-up. The scrolling contoured landscapes are fab, features such as the flight computer and weapons selection really add to the enjoyment rather than being a distraction, and because it's not limited to a certain number or type of mission there's an element of strategy involved too. Brill■



PLAYING TIPS

- **The world map "wraps around", so in order to reach a distant target it may be quicker to fly the "wrong way".**
- **Maverick missiles are most effective against ground targets, but they weigh more than ASRAAMs so you can carry fewer of them.**
- **Use your on-board computer to step through the database of enemy targets before taking off. You won't have so much time to do it while you're fighting off enemy interceptors!**
- **If you are damaged and you put the undercarriage down too early, you may stall. So . . . don't.**
- **Destroying tactories reduces the enemy's ability to replenish his forces; destroying communications towers reduces the co-ordination of his battle plan.**

PROGRAMMERS

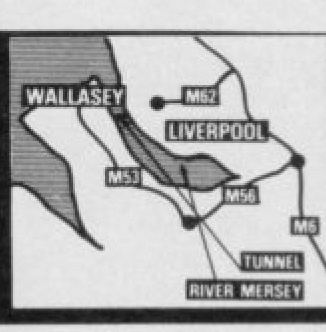
Digital Integration's in-house team developed the strategy aspects of the game, while the bulk of the design was done by **Ian Beynon.** Ian's a keen musician and has worked on music software as well as playing in several bands.

SOFTOGRAPHY: **Orion** (*Software Projects*, 1984), **Astro Attack** (*Amsoft*, 1985)

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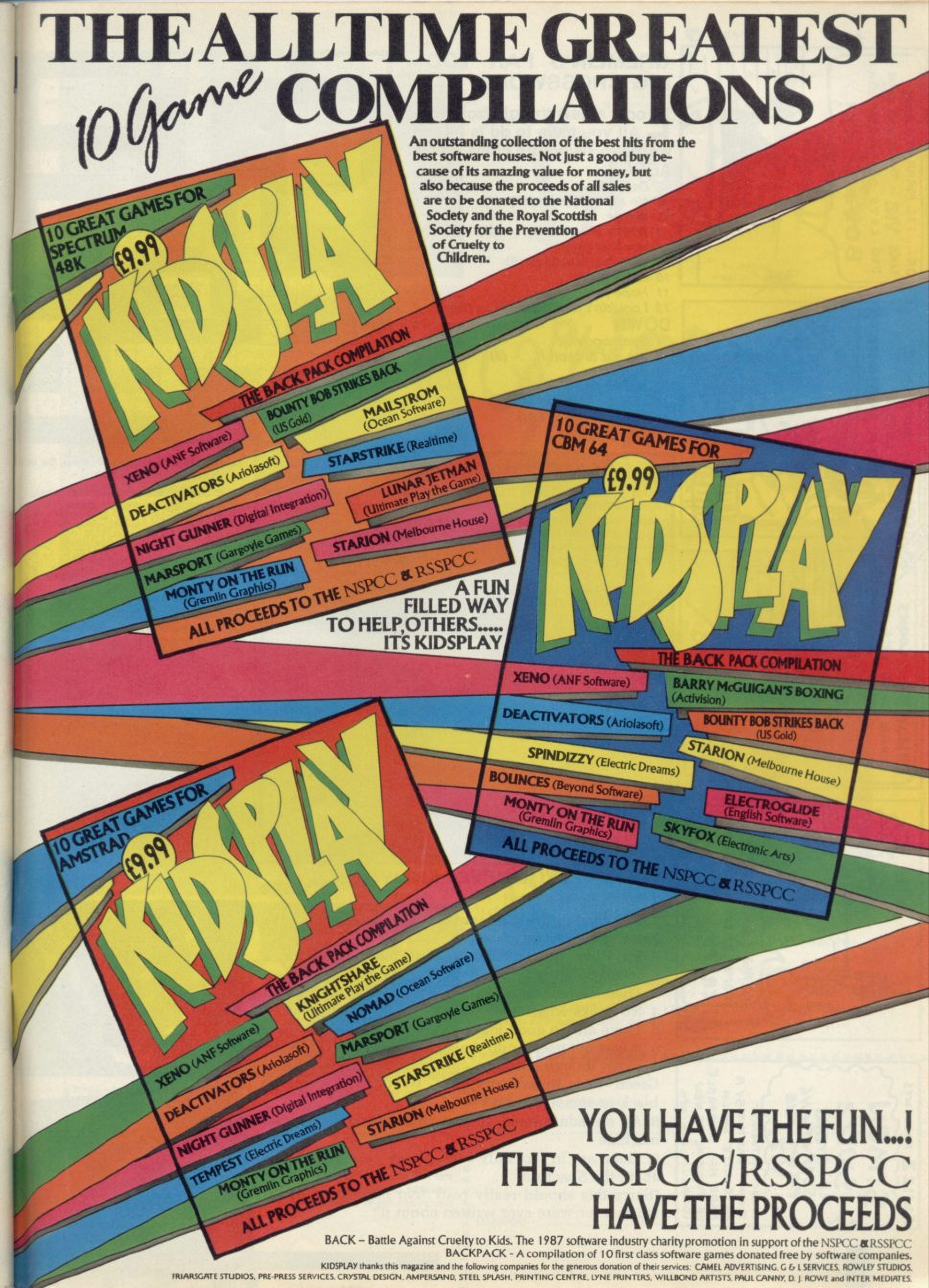
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GREMLIN'S FAR TOO BIG CROSSWORD

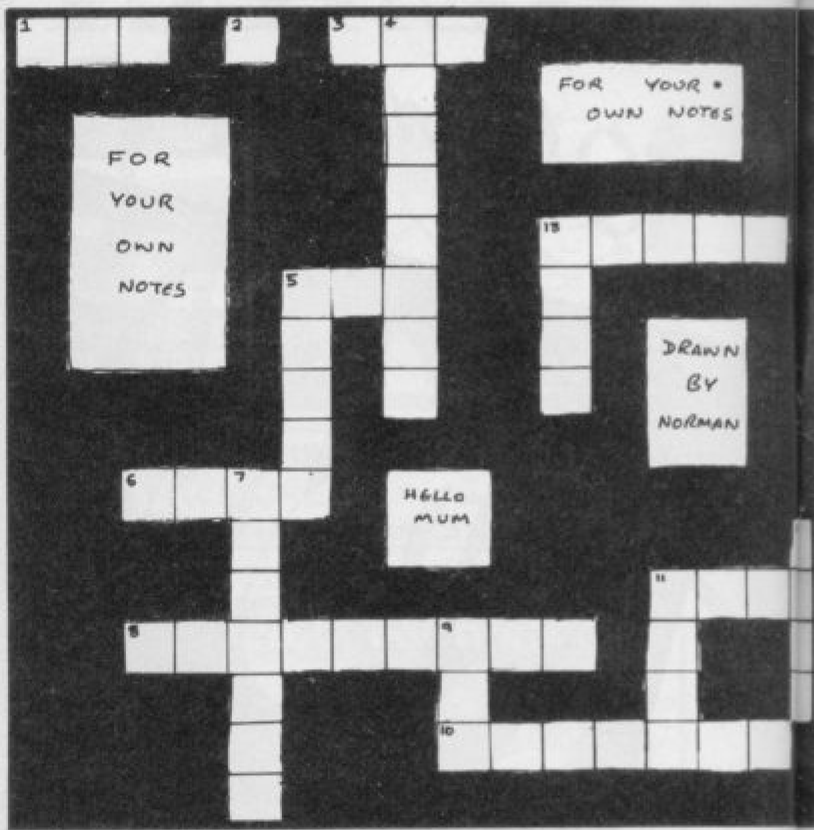
Look, a new thing! Exciting eh! All you have to do is fill the words in using the clues below.

ACROSS

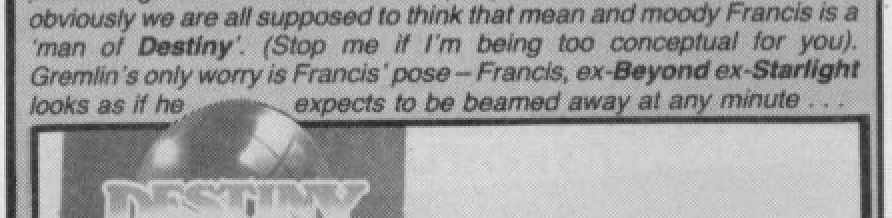
1 Deity (3)
2 Me myself personally (1)
3 Wager
5 Which Where Why . . . (3)
6 Not that (4)
8 Wot this puzzle is (9)
10 Entirely (7)
11 Hope (4)
13 I couldn't and I wish I . . . (5)

DOWN

4 Everybody
5 It's not broken it . . . (5)
7 Stupid
9 Not in (3)
11 Thy . . . be done (4)
12 Them Those . . . (4)
13 Tee Hee (4)



Here is a word of advice for all software houses. If you send pictures like this in to magazines you are asking for trouble . . . Behold Francis Lee (ex Lieutenant Witherspoon of the Starship ***Rainbird,*** *and anyone who remembers this reference gets a purple heart for long* **SU** *service . . . that reminds Gremlin what has happened to Star Trek . . . just asking . . .) Check out the moody pose and expensive looking Leather Jacket. Check out the strategically placed logo of Francis' new company* ***Destiny.*** *This is arty stuff' obviously we are all supposed to think that mean and moody Francis is a 'man of* ***Destiny***'. *(Stop me if I'm being too conceptual for you). Gremlin's only worry is Francis' pose – Francis, ex-****Beyond*** *ex-****Starlight*** *looks as if he expects to be beamed away at any minute . . .*



Confucius say: When chain still swings, the seat i

When you are in deep water it's a good idea to keep your mouth shut.

I never metamorphosis I didn't like (?).

the truth, why do they keep cutting bits off his nose?



12 THINGS YOU NEVER KNEW ABOUT THE SPECTRUM!

1 You can't throw it 20′ into the air and expect it not to break
2 Sir Clive Sinclair never considered even for a moment painting it red
3 There are almost no Eskimos who own one
4 No books whatsoever were ever written about it*
5 There are no good jokes about the Spectrum
6 It was not used to do the special effects in *Tron*
7 Even though Captain Scarlet says "Spectrum is Green" he is, in fact, completely wrong. Spectrums are black or sometimes grey
8 As an educational tool it makes a good games machine
9 There are in fact only nine things you don't know about the Spectrum

*Sorry this should really read "No <u>interesting</u> books whatsoever were ever written about it"







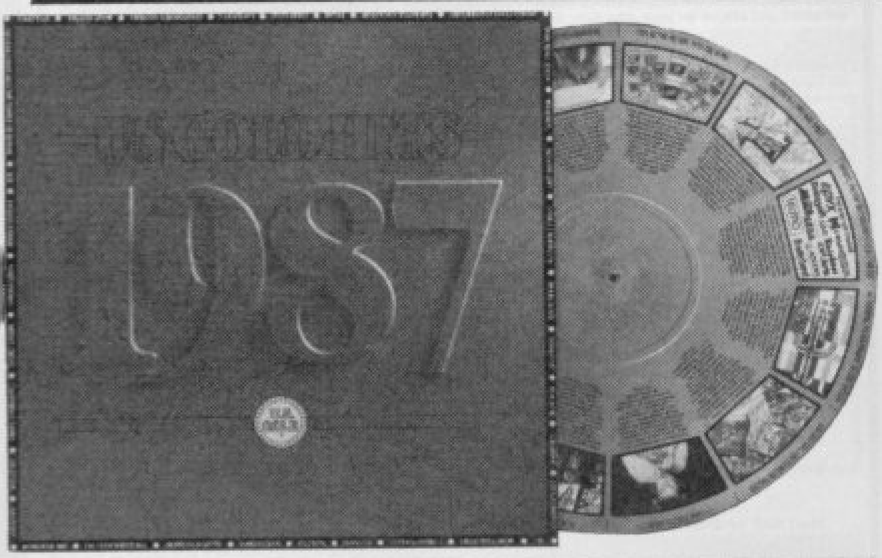
Gremlin

Now Virgin has done some pretty good stuff recently, so Gremlin doesn't want to be too critical but did think the enclosed picture merited a comment or two.

The people in the picture are the team of programmers, graphic people etc. who together created Dan Dare II. *"The Gang of Five ready to confront the Mekon" is the official caption, and certainly they all look pretty mean and threatening. Code Warriors doing battle. Hang on a minute, Gremlin (who has a distant recollection of basic maths principles) has spotted something a bit odd. Gang of how many?*

One, two, three, four, five . . . er six. Ho hum. Maybe one of them is the Mekon.

GREMLIN'S TOP TEN PROMOTIONAL DEVICES THAT LOOK LIKE DODGY LPS
1 US GOLD for US GOLD HITS
2 There aren't any more actually we just wanted an excuse to print a picture of this thing because it's so bizarre.
PS Richard Tidsall has lost his moustache again



Month's competition

Really not too bad actually, with hardly a single reference to the two girls in the picture and lots of sophisticated jokes about Yuppies. Gremlin found it difficult to choose a winner and wishes everyone who entered could win (this is of course a complete lie). Some of the favoured (but non-cash winning) entries were the cruel, 'The size of my car is in direct proportion to the size of my brain' from Stuart Clark from Fulbeck and 'I told you not to wash it in cold water' from Matthew Hagen. The winner because of it's inventiveness and general sarcasm was this from Jason McClure of Kirkby "And welcome to entertainment Skegness with Jonathan King".

Caption Competition number 16



"But SU readers don't now anything about Politics" said everyone when Grem suggested the above picture for captioning consideration. So let's prove you're not all a bunch of uncultured alien bashheads. Let's do the best caption we've ever done! Yoh! Let's be smart! Yip! Let's be slick! Yeah Let's be the best! WOOH! (Sorry I've just be on an EMAP training course).

Look at this picture which shows two well known political figures looking interested in what the man with the joystick is telling them. What could they be saying or thinking?

The sender of the best entry – to reach us by 1st March – will get the usual £20 just as soon as our Accounts department get out on parole.

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Caption ....

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MULTIFACE MAGAZINE, Instant Access Issue 3, out now only £1 from Catherine Redgrave, 30 New Barton Street, Salford, Manchester M6 7WW. Over 100 games poked.

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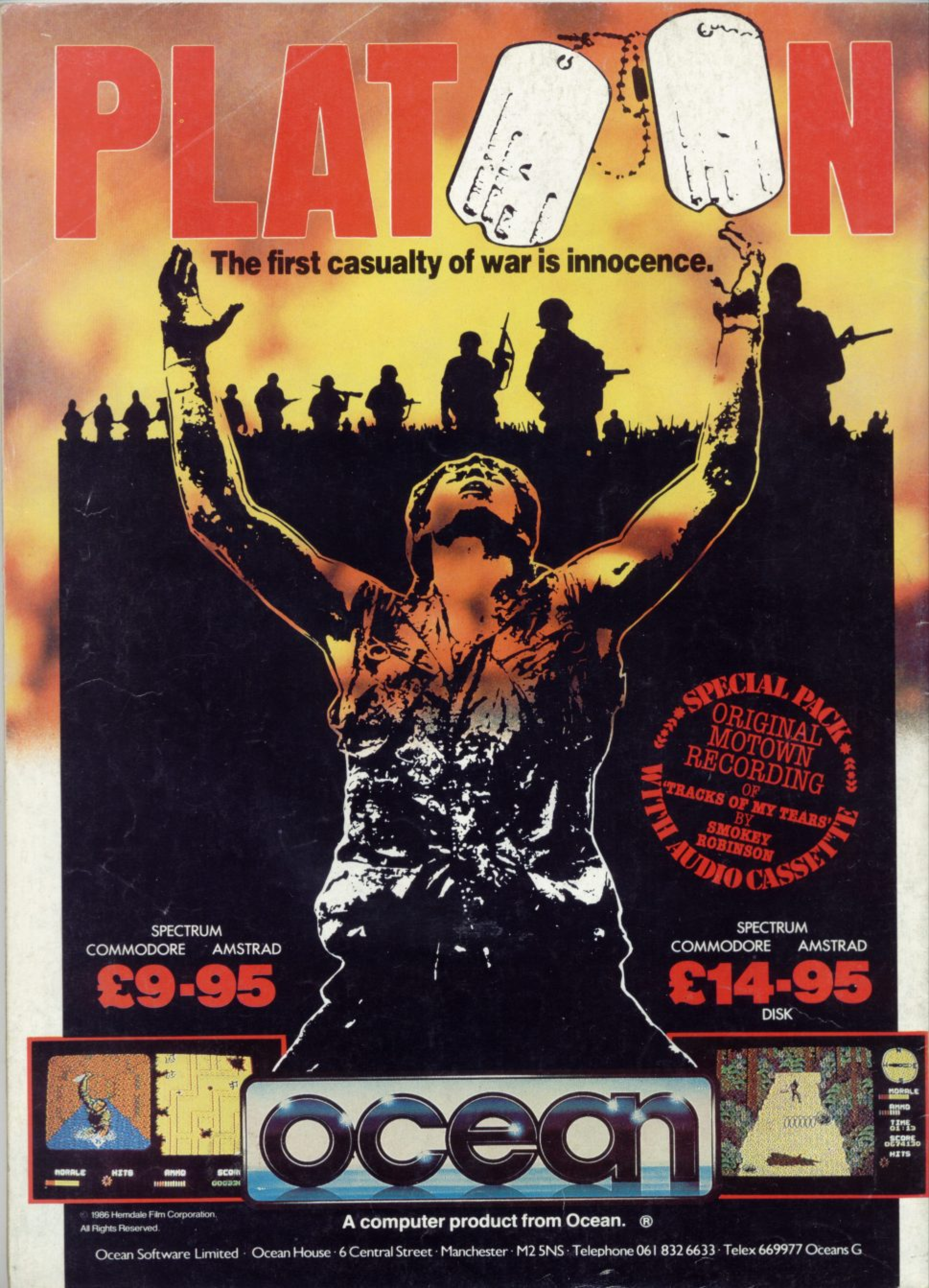
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